DRAFT INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

CATAVINA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

SEPTEMBER 2025

LEAD AGENCY:

CITY OF PALM DESERT

PLANNING DIVISION

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Palm Desert, CA 92260

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INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Catavina Residential Development Project

Lead Agency:

CITY OF PALM DESERT
PLANNING DIVISION
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1.0 Introduction

The Catavina Residential Development Project (herein referenced as the "project") proposes the construction of 546 single-family single- and two-story residences, onsite circulation, utility infrastructure, stormwater improvements, and open space areas on an approximately 77.3 gross acre (66.3 net acre) project site located south of Frank Sinatra Drive and west of Portola Avenue at Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 620-170-009; refer to Section 2.0, *Project Description* for more detail. Following a preliminary review of the proposed project, the City of Palm Desert (City) has determined that it is subject to the guidelines and statutes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Initial Study addresses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects of the project, as proposed.

1.1 Statutory Authority and Requirements

In accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Sections 21000-21189.70.10) and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, the City, acting in the capacity of lead agency under CEQA as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15367 (Lead Agency), is required by California Code of Regulations Section 15063 to undertake the preparation of an Initial Study to determine if the proposed project would have a significant environmental impact. If, as a result of the Initial Study, the Lead Agency finds that there is evidence that any aspect of the project may cause a significant environmental effect, the Lead Agency shall further find that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is warranted to analyze project-related and cumulative environmental impacts. Alternatively, if the Lead Agency finds that there is no evidence that the project, either as proposed or as modified to include the mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study, may cause a significant effect on the environment, the Lead Agency shall find that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment and shall prepare a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration for that project. Such a determination can be made only if "there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the Lead Agency" that such impacts may occur (Public Resources Code Section 21080(c)(1)).

The environmental documentation outlined above, which is ultimately determined by the City in accordance with CEQA, is intended as an informational document undertaken to provide an environmental basis for subsequent discretionary actions upon the project. The resulting documentation is not, however, a policy document and its approval and/or certification neither presupposes nor mandates any actions on the part of those agencies from whom permits and/or other discretionary approvals would be required.

The environmental documentation is subject to a public review period. During this review, comments on the document relative to environmental issues should be addressed to the City in writing. Following review of any written comments received, the City will consider these comments as a part of the project's environmental review and will include them with the Initial Study documentation for consideration by the City's decision-makers.

1.2 Purpose

CEQA Guidelines Section 15063 identifies specific disclosure requirements for inclusion in an Initial Study. Pursuant to those requirements, an Initial Study shall include:

- A description of the project, including the location of the project;
- Identification of the environmental setting;
- Identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries;
- Discussion of ways to mitigate significant effects identified, if any;
- Examination of whether the project is compatible with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land use controls; and
- The name(s) of the person(s) who prepared or participated in the preparation of the Initial Study.

1.3 Consultation

As soon as a Lead Agency (in this case, the City of Palm Desert) has determined that an Initial Study would be required for the project, the Lead Agency is directed to consult informally with "Responsible Agencies" and "Trustee Agencies" as defined in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15381 and 15386 respectively, that are responsible for resources affected by the project, to obtain the recommendations of those agencies as to whether an EIR or Negative Declaration should be prepared for the project. Following receipt of any written comments from those agencies, the Lead Agency considers any recommendations of those agencies in the formulation of the preliminary findings.

1.4 Incorporation by Reference

The following documents were utilized during preparation of this Initial Study and are incorporated into this document by reference. The documents are available for review on the City of Palm Desert's website (https://www.palmdesert.gov/departments/planning) and at the City's Planning Department located in City Hall at 73510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, California, 92260.

- *City of Palm Desert General Plan* (adopted November 10, 2016). The *City of Palm Desert General Plan* (General Plan) includes forecasts of long-term conditions and outlines development goals and policies. It guides growth and development within the City by designating land uses in the proposed land use map and through implementation of the goals and policies of the General Plan. It also provides a long-term vision for the City, and through its implementation goals and policies, indicate how that vision may be achieved over time. The General Plan includes the following elements: Land Use and Community Character, Mobility, Health and Wellness, Environmental Resources, Noise, Safety, Public Utilities and Services, and Housing. The Housing Element, in its sixth cycle, was last updated and integrated into the General Plan on September 29, 2022. All development projects, including subdivisions, public works, redevelopment projects, zoning decisions, and other various implementation tools must be consistent with the General Plan.

- *City of Palm Desert General Plan Environmental Impact Report* (certified November 10, 2016). The *City of Palm Desert General Plan Environmental Impact Report* (General Plan EIR) is intended to provide decision-makers and the public with information concerning the environmental effects of implementation of the General Plan. The General Plan EIR includes background data, analyzes potential environmental impacts, identifies General Plan policies and implementation plans that serve as mitigation, and identifies additional mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant effects due to implementation of the General Plan. The General Plan EIR determined that General Plan implementation would result in significant unavoidable environmental impacts in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Transportation topic areas. Since certification of the General Plan EIR, the City has prepared three addendums to the General Plan EIR to address minor, non-substantive revisions and clarifications to the General Plan. The most recent Addendum to the General Plan EIR was adopted by Resolution No. 2018-83.

- *Palm Desert Municipal Code* (current through Ordinance No. 1428, adopted March 13, 2025). The *Palm Desert Municipal Code* (Municipal Code) provides regulations for governmental operations, development, infrastructure, public health and safety, and business operations within the City. Municipal Code Title 25, *Zoning* (Zoning Ordinance), is established to promote the public health, safety, peace, comfort, convenience, prosperity, and welfare of the City and its inhabitants. The Zoning Ordinance regulates the use of buildings, structures, and land for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional purposes; regulates location, height, bulk, and area covered by buildings and structures; and controls lot size, yards, intensity of land use, signs, and off-street parking. In addition, Palm Desert Municipal Code Title 26, *Subdivisions*, grants the City legal authority to review the design and improvement of subdivisions, the processing of any proposed division, consolidation, and/or reconfiguration of land within the City.

2.0 Project Description

2.1 Project Location

The Catavina Residential Development (project) is located in the City of Palm Desert (City), within the Coachella Valley region of the County of Riverside; refer to Exhibit 1, *Regional Vicinity*. The 77.3 gross acre (66.3 net acre) project site is located south of Frank Sinatra Drive and west of Portola Avenue at Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 620-170-009; refer to Exhibit 2, *Local Vicinity*. Regional access to the project site is provided via Interstate 10 (I-10). Local access is provided via Frank Sinatra Drive and Portola Avenue.

2.2 Environmental Setting

The project site consists of a disturbed, vacant lot that was previously operated as the Santa Rosa Country Club Golf Course from approximately 1978 until its closure in 2015. The site is dominated by ruderal and non-native grasses and does not support any natural vegetation communities. There are two dried-up artificial ponds in the northern and central portions of the project site that are associated with the former golf course. Existing remnants of a cement cart path, clubhouse, cart storage structure, and asphalt parking lot are distributed throughout the site. Approximately 1.1 acres of the southeast portion of the project site is developed with a cell tower. A perimeter concrete block wall exists along the site's northern, southern, and western boundaries. Approximately 500 feet of the project's eastern boundary is partially fenced with concrete block wall.

General Plan Land Use Designation and Zoning

The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Town Center Neighborhood, which allows for moderate to higher intensity neighborhood development with a variety of housing choices, walkable streets, and mixed uses. This land use designation allows for a variable density ranging between seven (7) and 40 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The project has a gross density of seven (7) du/ac and would be consistent with the Town Center Neighborhood designation.

The project site is zoned Planned Residential (P.R.22), which allows for flexibility in residential development involving a mixture of residential densities, housing types, and community facilities. The P.R.22 zoning designation allows for a maximum project density of 22 du/ac. The project includes a mixture of residential densities; however, none would exceed 22 du/ac. As proposed, the project would be consistent with the P.R.22 zoning designation.

Surrounding Land Uses

Surrounding land uses include residential development, golf courses, and undeveloped land associated with the former golf course. Specifically, land uses surrounding the site include:

- *North*: Frank Sinatra Drive and single-family residential development bound the site to the north. This area is designated 2.1-5 du/ac Residential (2.1-5 R) and zoned Low Density Residential-2 (LDR-2).
- *East*: Portola Avenue runs parallel to the eastern site boundary at the south end of the site. A vacant parcel adjacent to Portola Avenue bounds the majority of the eastern site boundary. This area is designated Town Center Neighborhood and zoned P.R.-22.
- *South*: Existing single-family residences are located adjacent to the southern site boundary. This area is designated Golf Course and Resort Neighborhood and zoned P.R.-7.
- *West*: Existing single-family residences are located adjacent to the western site boundary. This area is designated Golf Course and Resort Neighborhood and zoned P.R.-7.

2.3 Project Characteristics

Development Concept

The proposed project includes development of 546 single-family single- and two-story residences, onsite circulation, utility infrastructure, stormwater improvements, and open space areas; refer to Exhibit 3, *Conceptual Site Plan*. The site is divided into four planning areas to allow for a variety of housing product types.

In the northwest portion of the project site, the project would develop 100 single-family units on 5,000-square foot lots. The northeast portion of the site would be developed with 43 six-pack clustered single-family units, for a total of 255 homes on lots ranging from 1,976 to 2,288 square feet. The central portion of the project site would be developed with 88 single-family homes on 3,000-square foot lots. The southern portion of the site would be developed with 103 single-family units on 4,050-square foot lots.

Approximately 15.4 acres of common open space would be distributed throughout the project site. Three retention basins totaling 2.5 acres are proposed.

The project would dedicate approximately 2.5 acres of public right-of-way along Frank Sinatra Drive and Portola Avenue to the City of Palm Desert. In addition, the project would preserve in place the 1.1-acre cell tower facility and its access in the southeast corner of the lot.

The project would be constructed to conform with the City of Palm Desert Zoning Code (Municipal Code Title 25, *Zoning*), which includes design standards related to building height, setbacks, and open space. As set forth in Municipal Code Section 25.10.050*, Development Standards*, a maximum building height of 40 feet or three-stories, whichever is less, is permitted. To minimize visual impacts on existing adjacent residential development, all units along the project's western and southern boundaries would be single-story. Setback requirements for planned streets range from 25 feet at local streets to 50 feet at freeways. Further, two-story, single-family detached building setbacks standards require a minimum setback of 100 feet or one lot depth, whichever is more, from the project's perimeter. The standards for separation between sides of buildings include a minimum of 7 feet for single-story, single-family detached buildings, and a minimum of 10 feet for two-story, single-family detached buildings. A minimum of 20 percent of the net area of common open space would be required.

Site Access

Access to the site would be provided via one access point on Frank Sinatra Drive at the northern site boundary and one access point on Portola Avenue at the southeast portion of the site. Access and circulation improvements would be designed and constructed consistent with City design and engineering standards.

Landscaping

Ornamental water-efficient landscaping would be installed throughout the site. A conceptual landscape plan was developed for the project in accordance with the requirements of the Palm Desert Municipal Code Chapter 24.04, *Water-Efficient Landscape.* Planting materials would include a variety of trees and shrubs, including large accent succulents, specimen shrubs, screening shrubs, massing shrubs, cacti, groundcovers, and lawn.

Utilities and Services

The following utilities and services would serve the site:

- *Water*. The proposed development would be served by Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) for domestic (drinking) water supply services.
- *Sewer*. CVWD provides wastewater/sanitary sewer service to the project area.

- *Stormwater Drainage*. Onsite stormwater infrastructure would be constructed and maintained by the developer. Stormwater facilities within the public right-of-way are operated and maintained by the City of Palm Desert Public Works Department.

- *Dry Utilities*. The site would be served by Southern California Edison for electricity services and the Southern California Gas Company for natural gas services.

2.4 Phasing/Construction

Construction of the project is estimated to begin in the December 2026 and consist of three phases: Phase I – Backbone; Phase 2 and 3 – Southern Half; and Phase 4 and 5 – Northern Half. The project is expected to begin operating in 2027 and to complete construction in December 2030.

Project earthwork is estimated to include 166,962 cubic yards of cut and 109,730 cubic yards of fill, with 7,536 cubic yards of export.

2.5 Agreements, Permits, and Approvals

The City, as Lead Agency, has discretionary authority over the proposed project, which requires the following discretionary approvals:

- CEQA Clearance;
- Tentative Map;
- Setback Variance (easterly boundary only);
- Final Map for backbone/master improvements;
- Final Maps for each residential planning area; and
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit under the Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board (Colorado River RWQCB).

Other anticipated future permits include a grading permit(s), building permit(s), and encroachment permit(s), as well as landscape review, architectural review, and site plan review by approving bodies including but not limited to the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD), Riverside County Sheriff Department, utility purveyors, and City Architectural Review Commission.

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Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

0 1.5 3 Miles

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online, World Topographic Map: *Palm Desert, California*

CATAVINA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (IS/MND)

Regional Vicinity

Exhibit 1

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Legend

Project Site

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

0 300 600 US Feet

Source: Esri, ArcGIS Online, 2024 Nearmap Imagery: *Palm Desert, California*

CATAVINA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (IS/MND)

Site Vicinity

Exhibit 2

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CATAVINA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (IS/MND)

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

NOT TO SCALE

Conceptual Site Plan

Source: MSA Consulting, April 15, 2025

Exhibit 3

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3.0 Initial Study Checklist

3.1 Background

1. **Project Title:**
   Catavina Residential Development Project

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
   City of Palm Desert
   73510 Fred Waring Drive
   Palm Desert, California, 92260

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
   Carlos Flores, Deputy Director of Development Services
   760.776.6478

4. **Project Location:**
   The project site is located south of Fred Waring Drive and west of Portola Avenue at Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 620-170-009.

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**
   Kim Molina
   Pacific Land Consultants C/O Blue Fern Development
   18300 Redmond Way, Suite 120
   Redmond, Washington 98052

6. **General Plan Designation:**
   Town Center Neighborhood (7- 40 du/ac)

7. **Zoning:**
   Planned Residential (P.R.22)

8. **Description of Project:**
   Refer to Section 2.3, *Project Characteristics*.

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**
   Surrounding land uses include residential development, golf courses, and undeveloped land associated with the former golf course. Refer to Section 2.2, *Environmental Setting*.

10. **Other anticipated public agencies whose approval is required:**
    - Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board
    - Coachella Valley Water District
    - Riverside County Fire Department

11. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?**
    In compliance with Assembly Bill (AB) 52, the City distributed letters notifying each tribe that requested to be on the City's list for the purposes of AB 52 of the opportunity to consult with the City regarding the proposed project. The letters were distributed by certified mail on May 5, 2025**.** The tribes had 30 days to respond to the City's request for consultation. Refer to Section 4.18, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, for additional information.

3.2 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated," as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐	Aesthetics		☐	Agriculture and Forestry	☐	Air Quality
☒	Biological Resources		☒	Cultural Resources	☐	Energy
☒	Geology and Soils		☐	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☒	Hazards and Hazardous Materials
☐	Hydrology and Water Quality		☐	Land Use and Planning	☐	Mineral Resources
☐	Noise		☐	Population and Housing	☐	Public Services
☐	Recreation		☒	Transportation	☒	Tribal Cultural Resources
☐	Utilities and Service Systems		☐	Wildfire	☒	Mandatory Findings of Significance

3.3 Lead Agency Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared. ☐

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared. ☒

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required. ☐

I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed. ☐

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required. ☐

Signature: [signature]

Title: Principal Planner

Printed Name: Carlos Flores

Agency: City of Palm Desert

Date: 9-18-2025

3.4 Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

This section analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. The issue areas evaluated in this Initial Study include:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

The environmental analysis in this section is patterned after the Initial Study Checklist recommended by the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G and used by the City of Palm Desert in its environmental review process. For the preliminary environmental assessment undertaken as part of this Initial Study's preparation, a determination that there is a potential for significant effects indicates the need to identify mitigation to avoid or minimize the impact.

For the evaluation of potential impacts, the questions in the Initial Study Checklist are stated and an answer is provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the Initial Study. The analysis considers the long-term, direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the development. To each question, there are four possible responses:

- *No Impact*. The development will not have any measurable environmental impact on the environment.

- *Less Than Significant Impact*. The development will have the potential for impacting the environment, although this impact will be below established thresholds that are considered to be significant.

- *Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated*. The development will have the potential to generate impacts which may be considered as a significant effect on the environment, although mitigation measures or changes to the development's physical or operational characteristics can reduce these impacts to levels that are less than significant.

- *Potentially Significant Impact*. The development will have impacts which are considered significant and additional analysis is required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

Where potential environmental impacts are anticipated to be significant, mitigation measures are required so that impacts may be avoided or reduced to insignificant levels.

4.0 Environmental Analysis

4.1 Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			✓	
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?				✓
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?			✓	
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			✓	

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less Than Significant Impact. A scenic vista is generally defined as a view of undisturbed natural lands exhibiting a unique or unusual feature that comprises an important or dominant portion of the viewshed.[1] Scenic vistas may also be represented by a particular distant view that provides visual relief from less attractive views of nearby features. Other designated Federal and State lands, as well as local open space or recreational areas, may also offer scenic vistas if they represent a valued aesthetic view within the surrounding landscape of nearby features.

The City's General Plan identifies views of the surrounding mountains and hillsides as scenic resources within the City. Specifically, the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains are approximately three miles southwest of the project site. Due to distance and intervening terrain, implementation of the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on views of the Santa Rosa Mountains.

The City's General Plan contains goal and policies designed to be carried out by city staff, City Council, Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. Policies 2.1 through 2.5 of the City's General Plan relate to protecting visual resources within the City, such as views of the surrounding mountains and hillsides. The project would adhere to relevant policies regarding the protection and preservation of visual resources within the City.

Further, in compliance with the City's Municipal Code Section 25.10.050, *Development Standards*, and Municipal Code Chapter 25.68, *Decisions by the Architectural Review Commission*, the project would be required to undergo a review process, including review by the Architectural Review Commission, prior to approval. This process would verify that the project's design is compatible with development in the surrounding vicinity and that it is consistent with applicable zoning regulations, including building height. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse impact on a scenic vista. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[1] A viewshed is the geographical area which is visible from a particular location.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?

No Impact. According to the California Department of Transportation, the nearest officially designated State Scenic Highway to the project site is State Route 74 (SR-74), located approximately 3.1 miles southwest of the project site.[2] Views of the project site are not afforded from SR-74 due to intervening topography, structures, and vegetation. Thus, the project would not substantially damage scenic resources within a State scenic highway. Therefore, no impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is located within an urbanized, developed area and consists of a vacant lot that previously operated as a golf course. The site is bordered by residential uses to the north, west, and south, and vacant parcel to the east with a golf course resort beyond.

The City's General Plan identifies the visual character of the Town Center Neighborhood land use designation as highly interconnected streetscapes with urban character featuring formal street tree arrangements and public open spaces. The project would be consistent with these visual characteristics. Furthermore, the project would adhere to requirements for the P.R.22 zoning designation, as identified in City's Municipal Code Section 25.10.050, *Development Standards.* Which contains development standards such as building height and setback requirements. The project proposes single-story residential units along the western and northern boundary of the project site. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 25.10.050, a setback of 20 feet is proposed at the northern end of the project site adjacent to Frank Sinatra Drive. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 25.10.050, the proposed two-story, single-family detached buildings must be set back 100 feet or one (1) lot depth, whichever is more, from the project perimeter. As shown in Exhibit 3, *Site Plan*, the project proposes a 55-foot setback for the two-story single-family residential units along the eastern project boundary. However, the project requests a setback variance. Following approval of the setback variance, impacts would be less than significant.

While project implementation would change the visual quality of the project site and its surroundings, the proposed project would not degrade the visual quality of the project area because the project is consistent with the surrounding uses and its current zoning. Further, the project would undergo City review, including review by the Architectural Review Commission, prior to development to ensure the project is consistent with applicable zoning, the City's design objectives, and other regulations governing scenic quality. This process would verify that the project's design is compatible with development in the surrounding vicinity. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less Than Significant Impact. Light impacts are typically associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. Glare may be a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light from highly polished surfaces, such as window glass and reflective cladding materials, and may interfere with the safe operation of a motor vehicle on adjacent streets. Daytime glare is common in urban areas and is typically associated

[2] California Department of Transportation, *Scenic Highwa*ys, https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways. Accessed January 8, 2025.

with mid- to high-rise buildings with exterior façades largely or entirely comprising highly reflective glass or mirror-like materials. Nighttime glare is primarily associated with bright point source lighting that contrasts with existing low ambient light conditions.

Project construction could involve temporary glare impacts as a result of construction equipment and materials. Although there may be construction equipment and materials that produce glare, such as side mirrors or unpainted metal surfaces, the potential for glare would be short-term (hours) in duration because of the movement of either the equipment or angle of the sun. Therefore, no adverse light or glare impacts to adjacent properties are anticipated to result from construction activities.

The project would comply with Municipal Code Chapter 9.24, *Noise Control*, which limits allowable construction hours occurring between October 1st and April 30th to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Between May 1st and September 30th, construction is allowed between 5:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Therefore, short-term construction-related impacts pertaining to nighttime lighting are not anticipated.

Once built, the housing development would increase lighting at the project site compared to existing conditions. However, the lighting would be similar to the existing surrounding community. Further, the project would be required to comply with the exterior lighting requirements included in Municipal Code Chapter 24.16, *Outdoor Lighting Requirements*, which contains requirements to minimize the offsite illumination onto adjoining properties. Further, the project would comply with General Plan Policy 2.5, which requires the limitation of light pollution from outdoor sources. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

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4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				✓
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				✓
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				✓
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				✓

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. According to the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Finder, the entire project site is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land, which is defined as land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. Examples of Urban and Built-Up Land include residential, industrial, commercial, institutional facilities, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, and water control structures.[3]

The project would not convert Prime, Statewide Important, Unique, or Locally Important Farmland into non-agricultural use pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program No impact would occur regarding conversion of farmlands to non-agricultural uses.

[3] California Department of Conservation, *California Important Farmland Finder*, https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/, accessed January 15, 2025.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. According to the General Plan EIR, there are no Williamson Act contracted lands in the City. Thus, project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The project site is zoned Planned Residential (P.R.22). The project site is not occupied or used for forest land or timberland. Further, the General Plan EIR specifies that no forest land or timberland exists within the City limits. Thus, project implementation would not result in the rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. Refer to Response 4.2(c). No impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. Refer to Responses 4.2(a) through 4.2(d). No impacts in this regard would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.3 Air Quality

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			✓	
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?			✓	
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			✓	
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results*.

Less Than Significant Impact. The project is located within the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), which is governed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). To reduce emissions, the SCAQMD adopted the *2022 Air Quality Management Plan* (2022 AQMP) which establishes a program of rules and regulations directed at reducing air pollutant emissions and achieving State and federal air quality standards. The AQMP is a regional and multi-agency effort including the SCAQMD, California Air Resources Board (CARB), the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The 2022 AQMP pollutant control strategies are based on the latest scientific and technical information and planning assumptions, including the *2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2020-2045 RTP/SCS), updated emission inventory methodologies for various source categories, and SCAG's latest growth forecasts. SCAG's latest growth forecasts were defined in consultation with local governments and with reference to local general plans. While SCAG has recently adopted the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS on April 4, 2024, SCAQMD has not released an updated AQMP. As such, this consistency analysis is based on the 2022 AQMP and the RTP/SCS that was adopted at the time, the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The SCAQMD considers projects that are consistent with the AQMP, which is intended to bring the Basin into attainment for all criteria pollutants, to also have less than significant cumulative impacts.

Criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP are defined by the following indicators:

Criterion 1:

With respect to the first criterion, SCAQMD methodologies require that an air quality analysis for a project include forecasts of project emissions in relation to contributing to air quality violations and delay of attainment.

a) Would the project result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations?

Since the consistency criteria identified under the first criterion pertains to pollutant concentrations, rather than to total regional emissions, an analysis of the project's pollutant emissions relative to localized pollutant concentrations is used as the basis for evaluating project consistency. As discussed in Response 4.3(c), localized concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO_X), particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}), and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$) would be less

than significant during project construction and operations. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations.[4]

b) *Would the project cause or contribute to new air quality violations?*

As discussed in Response 4.3(b), the proposed project would result in emissions that are below the SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, the project would not have the potential to cause or affect a violation of the ambient air quality standards.

c) *Would the project delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP?*

The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts regarding regional and localized concentrations during project construction and operations; refer to Responses 4.3(b) and 4.3(c). As such, the project would not delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or 2022 AQMP emissions reductions.

Criterion 2:

With respect to the second criterion for determining consistency with SCAQMD and SCAG air quality policies, it is important to recognize that air quality planning within the Basin focuses on attainment of ambient air quality standards at the earliest feasible date. Projections for achieving air quality goals are based on assumptions regarding population, housing, and growth trends. Thus, the SCAQMD's second criterion for determining project consistency focuses on whether the proposed project exceeds the assumptions utilized in preparing the forecasts presented in the 2022 AQMP. Determining whether a project exceeds the assumptions reflected in the 2022 AQMP involves the evaluation of the three criteria outlined below. The following discussion provides an analysis of each of these criteria.

a) *Would the project be consistent with the population, housing, and employment growth projections utilized in the preparation of the AQMP?*

Growth projections included in the 2022 AQMP form the basis for the projections of air pollutant emissions and are based on general plan land use designations and SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS demographics forecasts. The population, housing, and employment forecasts within the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS are based on local general plans as well as input from local governments, such as the City. The SCAQMD has incorporated these same demographic growth forecasts for various socioeconomic categories (e.g., population, housing, employment) into the 2022 AQMP.

The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Town Center Neighborhood which allows for a moderate to higher intensity neighborhood development with a permittable density between seven to 40 dwelling units per acre. The proposed project would have a gross density of seven dwelling units per acre (546 dwelling units divided by 77.3 gross acres) and would be consistent with the land use designation. The project site is zoned Planned Residential (P.R.22) which allows for flexibility in residential development involving a mixture of residential densities, housing types, and community facilities. The P.R.22 zoning designation allows for a maximum project density of 22 dwelling units per acre. As the proposed project would not result in a development that exceed the maximum density, the project would be consistent with the zoning designation for the site. As such, the project is consistent with the site's General Plan land use designation and zoning.

As discussed in Section 4.14, *Population and Housing*, the project could induce population growth in an area through the development of new residences. The project would construct 546 single-family residences.

[4] Because reactive organic gases (ROGs) are not a criteria pollutant, there is no ambient standard or localized threshold for ROGs. Due to the role ROG plays in ozone formation, it is classified as a precursor pollutant and only a regional emissions threshold has been established.

According to the California Department of Finance,[5] the population of the City was estimated to be 50,889 as of January 1, 2024, with approximately 2.00 persons per household. This would equate to approximately 1,092 new persons living within the City as a result of the proposed project.

According to the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS Demographics & Growth Forecast,[6] the number of people living within the City is anticipated to grow to 64,100 in 2045. The project-related increase of 1,092 residents would represent approximately 1.7 percent of the 2045 projected population and approximately eight percent to the City's planned growth of 13,211 residents from 2024 to 2045. Thus, the project would be consistent with the types, intensity, and patterns of land use envisioned for the site vicinity.

Additionally, as the SCAQMD has incorporated these same projections into the 2022 AQMP, it can be concluded that the proposed project would be consistent with the projections included in the 2022 AQMP. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

b) Would the project implement all feasible air quality mitigation measures?

The proposed project would result in less than significant air quality impacts. Compliance with all feasible emission reduction rules and measures identified by the SCAQMD would be required as identified in Responses 4.3(b) and 4.3(c). The proposed project meets this 2022 AQMP consistency criterion.

c) Would the project be consistent with the land use planning strategies set forth in the AQMP?

Land use planning strategies set forth in the 2022 AQMP are primarily based on the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. The existing SunLine Transit Agency (SLTA) bus stops are located approximately one mile to the east of the project site. Further, in compliance with CALGreen Code, all new single-family residential developments would require the installation of a listed raceway to accommodate a dedicated 208/240-volt branch circuit for the future installation of an electric vehicle (EV) charger. This project design feature would encourage and support the use of EVs within the proposed residential development. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the actions and strategies of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. In addition, as discussed above, the project would be consistent with the General Plan land use designation. The proposed project meets this AQMP consistency criterion.

In conclusion, the determination of 2022 AQMP consistency is primarily concerned with the long-term influence of a project on air quality in the Basin. The proposed project would not result in a long-term impact on the region's ability to meet State and federal air quality standards. Further, the proposed project's long-term influence on air quality in the Basin would also be consistent with the SCAQMD and SCAG's goals and policies and is considered consistent with the 2022 AQMP. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Criteria Pollutants

Carbon Monoxide (CO). CO is an odorless, colorless toxic gas that is emitted by mobile and stationary sources as a result of incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons or other carbon-based fuels. In cities, automobile exhaust can cause

[5] California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit, *Report E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2020-2023, Sacramento, California*, May 2023.

[6] Southern California Association of Governments, *2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy*, September 3, 2020.

as much as 95 percent of all CO emissions. CO replaces oxygen in the body's red blood cells. Individuals with a deficient blood supply to the heart, patients with diseases involving heart and blood vessels, fetuses (unborn babies), and patients with chronic hypoxemia (oxygen deficiency) as seen in high altitudes are most susceptible to the adverse effects of CO exposure. People with heart disease are also more susceptible to developing chest pains when exposed to low levels of carbon monoxide.

Ozone (O_3). O_3 occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. The layer surrounding the Earth's surface is the troposphere. The troposphere extends approximately 10 miles above ground level, where it meets the second layer, the stratosphere. The stratosphere (the "good" ozone layer) extends upward from about 10 to 30 miles and protects life on Earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. "Bad" O_3 is a photochemical pollutant, and needs volatile organic compounds (VOCs), NO_X, and sunlight to form; therefore, VOCs and NO_X are O_3 precursors. To reduce O_3 concentrations, it is necessary to control the emissions of these O_3 precursors. Significant O_3 formation generally requires an adequate amount of precursors in the atmosphere and a period of several hours in a stable atmosphere with strong sunlight. High O_3 concentrations can form over large regions when emissions from motor vehicles and stationary sources are carried hundreds of miles from their origins.

While O_3 in the upper atmosphere (stratosphere) protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation, high concentrations of ground-level O_3 (in the troposphere) can adversely affect the human respiratory system and other tissues. O_3 is a strong irritant that can constrict the airways, forcing the respiratory system to work hard to deliver oxygen. Individuals exercising outdoors, children, and people with pre-existing lung disease such as asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease are the most susceptible to the health effects of O_3. Short-term exposure (lasting for a few hours) to O_3 at elevated levels can result in aggravated respiratory diseases such as emphysema, bronchitis and asthma, shortness of breath, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of the lung tissue, increased fatigue, as well as chest pain, dry throat, headache, and nausea.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2). NO_X are a family of highly reactive gases that are a primary precursor to the formation of ground-level ozone and react in the atmosphere to form acid rain. NO_2 (often used interchangeably with NO_X) is a reddish-brown gas that can cause breathing difficulties at elevated levels. Peak readings of NO_2 occur in areas that have a high concentration of combustion sources (e.g., motor vehicle engines, power plants, refineries, and other industrial operations). NO_2 can irritate and damage the lungs and lower resistance to respiratory infections such as influenza. The health effects of short-term exposure are still unclear. However, continued or frequent exposure to NO_2 concentrations that are typically much higher than those normally found in the ambient air may increase acute respiratory illnesses in children and increase the incidence of chronic bronchitis and lung irritation. Chronic exposure to NO_2 may aggravate eyes and mucus membranes and cause pulmonary dysfunction.

Coarse Particulate Matter (PM_{10}). PM_{10} refers to suspended particulate matter, which is smaller than 10 microns or ten one-millionths of a meter. PM_{10} arises from sources such as road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, construction operations, and dust storms. PM_{10} scatters light and significantly reduces visibility. In addition, these particulates penetrate the lungs and can potentially damage the respiratory tract. On June 19, 2003, CARB adopted amendments to the Statewide 24-hour particulate matter standards based upon requirements set forth in the Children's Environmental Health Protection Act (Senate Bill 25).

Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$). Due to recent increased concerns over health impacts related to $PM_{2.5}$, both State and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards have been created. Particulate matter impacts primarily affect infants, children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing cardiopulmonary disease. In February 2024, the EPA lowered the federal primary $PM_{2.5}$ annual standard to 9.0 microgram per cubic meter (ug/m^3) from the 12.0 ug/m^3 standard set in 2012. The secondary annual standard remains at 15.0 ug/m^3. States and Tribal Authorities will submit initial recommendations of areas that do not attain this standard (i.e., nonattainment areas) to EPA by February 2025, and EPA will finalize area designations by February 2026.

On June 20, 2002, CARB adopted amendments for statewide annual ambient particulate matter air quality standards. These standards were revised/established due to increasing concerns by CARB that previous standards were

inadequate, as almost everyone in California is exposed to levels at or above the current State standards during some parts of the year, and the statewide potential for significant health impacts associated with particulate matter exposure was determined to be large and wide-ranging.

Due to the size of $PM_{2.5}$, these particles are more likely to be inhaled and deposited in the deeper parts of the lungs. Short-term exposure (up to 24 hours) would result in chronic bronchitis, asthma attacks, respiratory symptoms, and premature mortality.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2). SO_2 is a colorless, irritating gas with a rotten egg smell; it is formed primarily by the combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels. SO_2 is often used interchangeably with SO_X. Exposure of a few minutes to low levels of SO_2 can result in airway constriction in some asthmatics.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC). VOCs are hydrocarbon compounds (any compound containing various combinations of hydrogen and carbon atoms) that exist in the ambient air. VOCs contribute to the formation of smog through atmospheric photochemical reactions and may be toxic. Compounds of carbon (also known as organic compounds) have different levels of reactivity; that is, they do not react at the same speed or do not form O_3 to the same extent when exposed to photochemical processes. VOCs often have an odor, and some examples include gasoline, alcohol, and the solvents used in paints. Exceptions to the VOC designation include CO, CO_2, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate. VOCs are a criteria pollutant since they are a precursor to O_3, which is a criteria pollutant. The SCAQMD uses the terms VOC and ROG interchangeably (see below).

Reactive Organic Gases (ROG). Like VOCs, ROGs are also precursors in forming O_3 and consist of compounds containing methane, ethane, propane, butane, and longer chain hydrocarbons, which are typically the result of some type of combustion/decomposition process. Smog is formed when ROG and NO_X react in the presence of sunlight. ROGs are a criteria pollutant since they are a precursor to O_3, which is a criteria pollutant.

Construction

The project involves construction activities that would be performed in five phases: Phase 1 – Backbone; Phases 2 and 3 – Southern Half; and Phases 4 and 5 – Northern Half. Phase 1 – Backbone would comprise of rough grading of the entire site and upgrading supporting infrastructure for the proposed project. Phase 1 would consist of demolition, grading, and paving activities. Phases 2 and 3 – Southern Half would involve the construction of the southern half of the proposed project and would consist of grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating activities. Phases 4 and 5 – Northern Half would involve the construction of the northern half of the proposed project and would consist of grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating activities. It should be noted that Phases 2 and 3 – Southern Half and Phases 4 and 5 – Northern Half would occur concurrently. Construction activities would commence in 2026 and would be completed in 2030. Exhaust emission factors for typical diesel-powered heavy equipment are based on the California Emissions Estimator Model version 2022.1.1 (CalEEMod) program defaults. Variables factored in estimating the total construction emissions include the level of activity, length of construction period, number of pieces and types of equipment in use, site characteristics, weather conditions, number of construction personnel, and the amount of materials to be transported on- or off-site. The proposed project would require the export of approximately 7,536 cubic yards of soil. The analysis of daily construction emissions has been prepared utilizing CalEEMod. Refer to Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results*, for the CalEEMod outputs and results. Table 4.3-1, *Project-Generated Construction Emissions*, presents the anticipated daily short-term construction emissions.

Fugitive Dust Emissions

Construction activities are a source of fugitive dust emissions that may have a substantial, temporary impact on local air quality. In addition, fugitive dust may be a nuisance to those living and working in the project area. Fugitive dust emissions are associated with land clearing, ground excavation, cut-and-fill, and truck travel on unpaved roadways (including demolition as well as construction activities). Fugitive dust emissions vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity, specific operations, and weather conditions. Fugitive dust from grading, excavation

and construction is expected to be short-term and would cease upon project completion. Most of this material is inert silicates, rather than the complex organic particulates released from combustion sources, which are more harmful to health.

Table 4.3-1
Project-Generated Construction Emissions

Emissions Source	Pollutant (pounds/day)[1,2]					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Phase 1						
Year 1 (2026)	5.48	49.20	46.60	0.10	6.29	3.43
Year 2 (2027)	3.04	26.80	28.50	0.07	5.17	2.54
Phase 2 and Phase 3						
Year 1 (2027)	5.23	25.70	28.90	0.06	3.70	1.97
Year 2 (2028)	5.23	10.80	21.10	0.03	1.66	0.62
Year 3 (2029)	5.18	10.40	20.60	0.03	1.63	0.60
Year 4 (2030)	5.10	10.10	20.10	0.03	1.61	0.58
Phase 4 and Phase 5						
Year 1 (2027)	3.03	25.70	28.9	0.06	3.70	1.97
Year 2 (2028)	5.50	11.50	25.9	0.03	2.58	0.85
Year 3 (2029)	5.43	11.10	25.1	0.03	2.56	0.82
Year 4 (2030)	5.31	10.80	24.4	0.03	2.54	0.81
Overlapping Phases						
2027[3]	8.26	51.40	57.80	0.12	7.40	3.94
2028	10.73	22.50	47.00	0.06	4.24	1.47
2029	10.61	21.50	45.70	0.06	4.19	1.42
2030	10.41	20.90	44.50	0.06	4.15	1.39
Maximum Daily Emissions	***10.73***	***51.40***	***57.80***	***0.12***	***7.40***	***3.94***
SCAQMD Thresholds	*75*	*100*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold Exceeded?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Notes:
1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2022.1.1. The higher emissions between summer and winter were presented as a conservative analysis.
2. Modeling assumptions include compliance with SCAQMD Rule 403 which requires: properly maintain mobile and other construction equipment; replace ground cover in disturbed areas quickly; water exposed surfaces three times daily; cover stockpiles with tarps; water all haul roads twice daily; and limit speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.
3. Construction activities in Phase 1 would conclude in June 2027. Construction activities for Phases 2 through 5 would commence in July 2027. As such, there is no overlap between Phase 1 and Phases 2 through 5.

Source: Refer to Appendix A for assumptions used in this analysis.

Dust (larger than 10 microns) generated by such activities usually becomes more of a local nuisance than a serious health problem. Of particular health concern is the amount of PM_{10} generated as a part of fugitive dust emissions. PM_{10} poses a serious health hazard alone or in combination with other pollutants. $PM_{2.5}$ is mostly produced by mechanical processes. These include automobile tire wear, industrial processes such as cutting and grinding, and re-suspension of particles from the ground or road surfaces by wind and human activities such as construction or agriculture. $PM_{2.5}$ is mostly derived from combustion sources, such as automobiles, trucks, and other vehicle exhaust, as well as from stationary sources. These particles are either directly emitted or are formed in the atmosphere from the combustion of gases such as NO_X and SO_X combining with ammonia. $PM_{2.5}$ components from material in the Earth's crust, such as dust, are also present, with the amount varying in different locations.

The project would adhere to SCAQMD Rules 402 and 403 (which require watering of inactive and perimeter areas, track-out and street sweeping requirements in accordance with Rule 1186/1186.1, etc.), to reduce PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations. As depicted in Table 4.3-1, total PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds during construction. Thus, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions impacts associated with project construction would be less than significant.

Construction Equipment and Worker Vehicle Exhaust

Exhaust emissions from construction activities include emissions associated with the transport of machinery and supplies to and from the project site, employee commutes to the project site, emissions produced on-site as the equipment is used, and emissions from trucks transporting materials to/from the site. As presented in Table 4.3-1, construction equipment and worker vehicle exhaust emissions (i.e., ROG, NO_X, CO, SO_2, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$) would not exceed the established SCAQMD thresholds for all criteria pollutants. Therefore, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

ROG Emissions

In addition to gaseous and particulate emissions, the application of asphalt and surface coatings creates ROG emissions, which are O_3 precursors. In accordance with the methodology prescribed by the SCAQMD, ROG emissions associated with paving and architectural coating have been quantified with the CalEEMod model. As required by SCAQMD Regulation XI, Rule 1113 – *Architectural Coating,* all architectural coatings for the proposed structures would comply with specifications on painting practices as well as regulation on the ROG content of paint.[7] ROG emissions associated with the proposed project would be less than significant; refer to Table 4.3-1.

Total Daily Construction Emissions

As indicated in Table 4.3-1, criteria pollutant emissions during construction of the proposed project would not exceed the SCAQMD significance thresholds. Thus, total construction related air emissions would be less than significant.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

Asbestos is a term used for several types of naturally occurring fibrous minerals that are a human health hazard when airborne. The most common type of asbestos is chrysotile, but other types such as tremolite and actinolite are also found in California. Asbestos is classified as a known human carcinogen by State, federal, and international agencies and was identified as a toxic air contaminant by CARB in 1986.

Asbestos can be released from serpentinite and ultramafic rocks when the rock is broken or crushed. At the point of release, the asbestos fibers may become airborne, causing air quality and human health hazards. These rocks have been commonly used for unpaved gravel roads, landscaping, fill projects, and other improvement projects in some localities. Asbestos may be released to the atmosphere due to vehicular traffic on unpaved roads, during grading for development projects, and at quarry operations. All these activities may have the effect of releasing potentially harmful asbestos into the air. Natural weathering and erosion processes can act on asbestos bearing rock and make it easier for asbestos fibers to become airborne if such rock is disturbed. According to the Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, *A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos Report,*[8] serpentinite and ultramafic rocks are not known to occur within the project area. Thus, no impacts would occur in this regard.

[7] South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Rule 1113 Architectural Coatings*, http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xi/r1113.pdf, accessed January 29, 2024.

[8] Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, *A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos Report*, August 2000, https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/toxics/asbestos/ofr_2000-019.pdf, accessed January 29, 2024.

Operations

Long-term operational air quality impacts consist of mobile source emissions generated from project-related traffic and emissions from stationary area and energy sources. Emissions associated with each source are detailed in Table 4.3-2, *Project-Generated Operational Emissions*, and discussed below.

Table 4.3-2
Project-Generated Operational Emissions

Emissions Source	Pollutant (pounds/day)[1]					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_X	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Project Summer Emissions						
Area	27.30	0.29	31.10	<0.01	0.01	0.01
Energy	0.29	4.90	2.09	0.03	0.40	0.40
Mobile	15.80	17.00	183.00	0.48	43.50	11.20
Total Summer Emissions[2]	***43.39***	***22.19***	***216.19***	***0.51***	***43.91***	***11.61***
SCAQMD Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold Exceeded?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***
Project Winter Emissions						
Area	24.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Energy	0.29	4.90	2.09	0.03	0.40	0.40
Mobile	13.10	18.50	123.00	0.43	43.50	11.20
Total Winter Emissions[2]	***37.99***	***23.40***	***125.09***	***0.46***	***43.90***	***11.60***
SCAQMD Threshold	*55*	*55*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Threshold Exceeded?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Notes:
1. Emissions were calculated using CalEEMod version 2022.1.1.
2. The numbers may be slightly off due to rounding.

Source: Refer to Appendix A for assumptions used in this analysis.

Area Source Emissions

Area source emissions include those generated by architectural coatings, consumer products, and landscape maintenance equipment associated with the development of the proposed project. According to the project Applicant, the proposed project would utilize all-electric landscaping equipment. However, as a conservative analysis, this feature was not accounted for in the modeling. As shown in Table 4.3-2, area source emissions during both summer and winter would not exceed established SCAQMD thresholds. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Energy Source Emissions

Energy source emissions would be generated because of electricity and natural gas usage associated with the proposed project. The primary use of electricity and natural gas by the project would be for space heating and cooling, water heating, ventilation, lighting, appliances, and electronics. The project would install energy efficient appliance which would reduce overall energy consumption. However, as a conservative analysis, this feature was not accounted for in the modeling. Energy source emissions would not exceed established SCAQMD thresholds; refer to Table 4.3-2. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mobile Source

Mobile sources are emissions from motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions. Depending upon the pollutant being discussed, the potential air quality impact may be of either regional or local concern. For example, ROG, NO_X, SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ are all pollutants of regional concern (NO_X and ROG react with sunlight to form O_3 [photochemical smog], and wind currents readily transport SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$). However, CO tends to be a localized pollutant, dispersing rapidly at the source.

Project-generated vehicle emissions were estimated using CalEEMod. According to the *Scoping Agreement for Traffic Impact* prepared by Michael Baker International for the project, the proposed project would generate 4,810 average daily trips, including 349 trips during the a.m. peak hour and 490 trips during the p.m. peak hour. As shown in Table 4.3-2, mobile source emissions for both summer and winter would not exceed established SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Total Operational Emissions

As shown in Table 4.3-2, the total operational emissions (combined emissions from area, energy, and mobile sources) for both summer and winter would not exceed established SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Air Quality Health Impacts

Adverse health effects induced by criteria pollutant emissions are highly dependent on a multitude of interconnected variables (e.g., cumulative concentrations, local meteorology and atmospheric conditions, and the number and character of exposed individual [e.g., age, gender]). In particular, O_3 precursors, VOCs, and NO_X, affect air quality on a regional scale. Health effects related to O_3 are therefore the product of emissions generated by numerous sources throughout a region. Existing models have limited sensitivity to small changes in criteria pollutant concentrations, and, as such, translating project-generated criteria pollutants to specific health effects or additional days of nonattainment would produce meaningless results. In other words, the project's less than significant increases in regional air pollution from criteria air pollutants would have nominal or negligible impacts on human health.

As noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the SCAQMD (April 6, 2015) for *Sierra Club vs. County of Fresno*, the SCAQMD acknowledged it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to quantify health impacts of criteria pollutants for various reasons including modeling limitations as well as where in the atmosphere air pollutants interact and form. Further, as noted in the Brief of Amicus Curiae by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) (April 13, 2015) for the *Sierra Club vs. County of Fresno*, SJVAPCD acknowledged that currently available modeling tools are not equipped to provide a meaningful analysis of the correlation between an individual development project's air emissions and specific human health impacts.

The SCAQMD acknowledges that health effects quantification from O_3, as an example, is correlated with the increases in ambient level of O_3 in the air (concentration) that an individual person breathes. The SCAQMD's Brief of Amicus Curiae for *Sierra Club vs. County of Fresno* states that it would take a large amount of additional emissions to cause a modeled increase in ambient O_3 levels over the entire region. The SCAQMD states that based on their own modeling in the SCAQMD's *2012* AQMP, a reduction of 432 tons (864,000 pounds) per day of NO_X and a reduction of 187 tons (374,000 pounds) per day of VOCs would reduce O_3 levels at highest monitored sites by only nine parts per billion. As such, the SCAQMD concludes that it is not currently possible to accurately quantify O_3-related health impacts caused by NO_X or VOC emissions from relatively small projects (defined as projects with regional scope) due to photochemistry and regional model limitations. Thus, as the project would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds for construction and operational air emissions, the project would have a less than significant impact for air quality health impacts.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less Than Significant Impact. Sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers. The CARB has identified the following groups of individuals as those most likely to be affected by air pollution: the elderly over 65, children under 14, athletes, and persons with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis. The closest sensitive receptors to the project site are single-family residences located adjacent to the south and west of the project site.

Localized Significance Thresholds

Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) were developed in response to SCAQMD Governing Boards' Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative (I-4). The SCAQMD provided the *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology* (dated June 2003 [revised 2008]) for guidance. The LST methodology assists lead agencies in analyzing localized air quality impacts. The SCAQMD provides the LST lookup tables for one-, two-, and five-acre projects emitting CO, NO_X, $PM_{2.5}$, and/or PM_{10}. The LST methodology and associated mass rates are not designed to evaluate localized impacts from mobile sources traveling over the roadways. The project site is located within Source Receptor Area (SRA) 30, Coachella Valley.

Construction LST

The SCAQMD guidance on applying CalEEMod to LSTs specifies the number of acres a particular piece of equipment would likely disturb per day.[9] SCAQMD provides LST thresholds for one-, two-, and five-acre site disturbance areas; SCAQMD does not provide LST thresholds for projects over five acres. The project would actively disturb approximately three acres per day during the grading phase of construction. Therefore, the LST thresholds for two-acre were conservatively utilized for the construction LST analysis. The closest sensitive receptors are single-family residences adjacent to the south and west of the project boundary. These sensitive land uses may be potentially affected by air pollutant emissions generated during on-site construction activities. LST thresholds are provided for distances to sensitive receptors of 25, 50, 100, 200, and 500 meters. As the nearest sensitive receptor is located adjacent to the southern and western boundaries, the LST values for 25-meter were used.

Table 4.3-3, *Localized Emissions Significance*, shows the localized mitigated construction-related emissions for NO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ compared to the LSTs for SRA 30. It is noted that the localized emissions presented in Table 4.3-3 are less than those in Table 4.3-1 because localized emissions include only on-site emissions (e.g., from construction equipment and fugitive dust) and do not include off-site emissions (e.g., from hauling activities). As shown in Table 4.3-3, the project's localized construction emissions would not exceed the LSTs for SRA 30. Therefore, localized significance impacts from project-related construction activities would be less than significant.

Table 4.3-3
Localized Emissions Significance

Construction Year[1,2]	Pollutant (pounds/day)			
	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Phase 1				
2026 (Grading)	27.2	27.6	4.71	2.46
2027 (Grading)	25.6	27.3	4.63	2.39
Phases 2 and 3				
2027 (Grading)	25.6	27.3	3.43	1.91
2028 (Building Construction)	8.92	12.9	0.30	0.28
2029 (Building Construction)	8.58	12.9	0.28	0.25
2030 (Building Construction)	8.39	12.9	0.26	0.24
Phases 4 and 5				
2027 (Grading)	25.6	27.3	3.43	1.91
2028 (Building Construction)	8.92	12.9	0.30	0.28
2029 (Building Construction)	8.58	12.9	0.28	0.25
2030 (Building Construction)	8.39	12.9	0.26	0.24

[9] The number of acres represent the total acres traversed by grading equipment. To properly grade a piece of land, multiple passes with equipment may be required. The disturbance acreage is based on the equipment list and days of the grading phase according to the anticipated maximum number of acres a given piece of equipment can pass over in an 8-hour workday.

Table 4.3-3, continued

Construction Year[1,2]	Pollutant (pounds/day)			
	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Overlapping Phases				
2027 (Phase 2 through Phase 5)[4]	51.2	54.6	6.86	3.82
2028 (Phase 2 through Phase 5)	17.84	25.8	0.60	0.56
2029 (Phase 2 through Phase 5)	17.16	25.8	0.56	0.5
2030 (Phase 2 through Phase 5)	16.78	25.8	0.52	0.48
Maximum Daily Emissions	**51.2**	**54.6**	**6.86**	**3.82**
Localized Significance Threshold[3,4]	191	1,299	7	5
Thresholds Exceeded?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Notes:
1. Modeling assumptions include compliance with SCAQMD Rule 403 which requires properly maintaining mobile and other construction equipment; replacing ground cover in disturbed areas quickly; watering exposed surfaces three times daily; covering stockpiles with tarps; watering all haul roads twice daily; and limiting speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.
2. Construction activities associated with the highest emissions are listed next to the construction year.
3. The LST was determined using Appendix C of the SCAQMD's *Final Localized Significant Threshold Methodology* guidance document for pollutants NO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. The LST was based on the anticipated daily acreage disturbance for construction (approximately two-acre as a conservative estimate; therefore, the two-acre threshold was used) and distance to sensitive receptor (25 meters) for SRA 30, Coachella Valley.
4. Construction activities in Phase 1 would conclude in June 2027. Construction activities for Phases 2 through 5 would commence in July 2027. As such, there is no overlap between Phase 1 and Phases 2 through 5.

Source: Refer to Appendix A for assumptions used in this analysis.

Operational LST

According to SCAQMD LST methodology, LSTs would apply to operational activities if the project includes stationary sources or attracts mobile sources that may spend extended periods queuing and idling at the site (i.e., warehouse or transfer facilities). The proposed project does not include such uses. Thus, due to the lack of such emissions, no long-term LST analysis is needed. Operational LST impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

CO emissions are a function of vehicle idling time, meteorological conditions, and traffic flow. Under certain extreme meteorological conditions, CO concentrations near a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthful levels (e.g., adversely affecting residents, school children, hospital patients, and the elderly).

The Basin is designated as an attainment/maintenance area for the federal CO standards and an attainment area under State standards. There has been a decline in CO emissions even though vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on U.S. urban and rural roads have increased; estimated anthropogenic CO emissions have decreased 68 percent between 1990 and 2014. In 2014, mobile sources accounted for 82 percent of the nation's total anthropogenic CO emissions.[10] Three major control programs have contributed to the reduced per-vehicle CO emissions, including exhaust standards, cleaner burning fuels, and motor vehicle inspection/maintenance programs.

According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, a potential CO hotspot may occur at any location where the background CO concentration already exceeds 9.0 parts per million (ppm), which is the 8-hour California ambient air quality standard. The closest monitoring station to the project site that monitors CO concentration is Palm Springs-Fire Station monitoring site, located at 590 East Racquet Club Avenue, approximately 10.7 miles to the northwest of the project site. The maximum CO concentration at Palm Springs-Fire Station monitoring site was measured at 3.398 ppm

[10] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Carbon Monoxide Emissions*, https://cfpub.epa.gov/roe/indicator_pdf.cfm?i=10, accessed January 29, 2024.

in 2024.[11] Given that the background CO concentration does not currently exceed 9.0 ppm, a CO hotspot would not occur at the project site. Therefore, CO hotspot impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The proposed project does not include any uses identified by the SCAQMD as being associated with odors.

Construction activities associated with the project may generate detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust and architectural coatings. However, construction-related odors would be short-term in nature and cease upon project completion. In addition, the project would be required to comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485, which minimize the idling time of construction equipment either by requiring equipment to be shut off when not in use or limiting idling time to no more than five minutes. Compliance with these existing regulations would further reduce the detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust. The project would also be required to comply with the SCAQMD Regulation XI, *Rule 1113 – Architectural Coating*, which would minimize odor impacts from ROG emissions during architectural coating. Any odor impacts to existing adjacent land uses would be short-term and negligible. As such, the project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[11] California Air Resources Board, *Air Quality and Meteorological Information*, https://www.arb.ca.gov/aqmis2/aqdselect.php?tab=specialrpt, accessed January 29, 2024.

4.4 Biological Resources

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		✓		
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				✓
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on State or Federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				✓
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?		✓		
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				✓
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?				✓

This section is primarily based upon the *Biological Resources Assessment for the Catavina Residential Project in Palm Desert, Riverside County, California*, prepared by Michael Baker International, dated August 21, 2025; refer to Appendix B, *Biological Resources Analysis.*

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. A general habitat assessment was conducted on January 16, 2025 to document existing biological conditions and determine the potential for special-status plant and wildlife species to occur within the project site; refer to Appendix B. Prior to conducting the field survey, thorough literature reviews and records searches were conducted to determine which special-status biological resources have the potential to occur on or within the general vicinity of the project site. The project site is located within the boundaries of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) but is not in a Conservation Area or modeled habitat for any covered species. As such, an MSHCP Consistency Analysis was also conducted as part of Appendix B.

Special-Status Plant Species

Based on review of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Electronic Inventory, a total of 36 special-status plant species have the potential to occur on the project site. One federally listed endangered plant species, Coachella Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*), was also recorded in the vicinity by IPaC. Based on the results of the literature review and the field survey, existing/historical site conditions, and a review of specific habitat requirements, occurrence records, and known distributions, Michael Baker determined that all special-status plant species identified during the literature review are not expected to occur due to a lack of suitable habitat. No impacts would occur in this regard.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

A total of 31 special-status wildlife species were determined to have the potential to occur on the project site. In addition, monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) was recorded in the vicinity by IPaC. No special-status wildlife species were observed during the field survey. Of the 31 species identified, seven (7) special-status wildlife species have moderate potential to occur on the project site: red-diamond rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvilli*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), vermilion flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*), and the western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*).

<u>Red-diamond rattlesnake</u>

Due to the disturbed nature of the project site and lack of native habitat, red-diamond rattlesnake are not expected to be present in large numbers, if at all. Therefore, potential impacts would not drop regional populations below self-sustaining levels and are considered less than significant.

<u>Coast horned lizard</u>

Due to the disturbed nature of the project site and lack of native habitat, red-diamond rattlesnake are not expected to be present in large numbers, if at all. Therefore, potential impacts would not drop regional populations below self-sustaining levels and are considered less than significant.

<u>Golden eagle</u>

The golden eagle has the potential to forage in the vicinity of the project site but would not be directly impacted by the proposed project. No impact would occur.

<u>Loggerhead shrike</u>

The loggerhead shrike is not expected to nest on site due to a lack of suitable habitat. The loggerhead shrike has the potential to forage in the vicinity of the project site but would not be directly impacted by the proposed project. Nonetheless, to further ensure there are no direct impacts to the species, a pre-construction nesting bird survey would be completed by a qualified biologist within three days of ground disturbing activities. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** would ensure impacts are less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

<u>Vermillion flycatcher</u>

The vermillion flycatcher is not expected to nest on site due to a lack of suitable habitat. The loggerhead shrike has the potential to forage in the vicinity of the project site but would not be directly impacted by the proposed project. Nonetheless, to further ensure there are no direct impacts to the species, a pre-construction nesting bird survey would be completed by a qualified biologist within three days of ground disturbing activities. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** would ensure impacts are less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Western yellow bat

The western yellow bat is a covered species within the CVMSHCP. The project would be subject to payment of the Local Development Mitigation Fee pursuant to Section 5.2.1.1 of the CVMSHCP. Following payment of the Local Development Mitigation Fee, impacts would be less than significant. To further ensure there are no direct impacts to the species, **Mitigation Measure BIO-2** would require that tree trimming/removal activities occur outside of the bat maternity season (i.e., October 1 through February 28). If tree removal/trimming activities occur during the maternity season, which is March 1 through September 30, a pre-construction bat survey would be conducted by a qualified biologist within seven days prior to these activities. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-2**, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Burrowing owl

Burrowing owl are a covered species within the CVMSHCP. The project would be subject to payment of the Local Development Mitigation Fee pursuant to Section 5.2.1.1 of the CVMSHCP. Although there were no suitable burrow structures observed that could support this species, due to the presence of suitable foraging habitat and potential for burrowing owls to occupy the project site between the time the Habitat Assessment was conducted and project implementation, impacts to burrowing owl are considered potentially significant. Payment of the Local Development Mitigation Fee and **Mitigation Measure BIO-3** would ensure there are no direct impacts on burrowing owl and would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-1 **Pre-construction Nesting Bird Survey**. Within three days prior to ground-disturbing activities associated with project implementation that would occur during the nesting/breeding season of native bird species potentially nesting on the site (typically February 1 through August 31 in the project region, or as determined by a qualified biologist), a nesting bird survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if active nests protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and/or the California Fish and Game Code are present and could be potentially directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed project. If active nests are found, clearing and construction within 100 feet of the nest (300 feet for raptors) shall be postponed or halted at the discretion of the biologist, or until the biologist has confirmed the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged.

BIO-2 **Roosting Bat Avoidance.** To the greatest extent practicable, tree trimming and removal activities shall be performed outside of the bat maternity season, i.e., October 1 through February 28, to avoid direct impacts to nonvolant (flightless) young bats that may roost in trees. If tree removal and trimming occur during the maternity season, which is March 1 through September 30, a pre-construction bat survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within seven days prior to these activities. Each potentially suitable tree shall be closely inspected by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of maternity roosts. If bats are not detected, the tree(s) may be removed in the presence of a qualified biological monitor. If bats are detected, the occupied tree(s) shall be left in place and an appropriate buffer (as determined by the qualified biologist) shall be placed around the tree until the end of the maternity season or until otherwise directed by the qualified biologist.

BIO-3 **Burrowing Owl Pre-construction Survey.** Within 30 days prior to any ground disturbing activities, a burrowing owl pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine the presence/absence of burrowing owls on the project site and within a 500-foot buffer. Walking transects will be spaced no greater than 30 meters apart to ensure 100 percent visual coverage of the survey area. The location of all burrowing owls or burrows with burrowing owl sign shall be recorded and mapped. A written report documenting the survey shall be prepared following the survey. If burrowing owl individuals or burrowing owl sign are detected during the pre-construction survey, then CDFW shall be notified to discuss appropriate avoidance measures. If avoidance is not feasible, a Burrowing Owl Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (BOMMP) shall be developed to ensure there are no direct impacts on burrowing owl. The BOMMP shall be approved by CDFW prior to project implementation.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. The project site has been developed since the late 1970s and does not support riparian habitat or other native vegetation communities; refer to Appendix B. One sensitive natural community, Desert Fan Palm Oasis, was recorded in the CNDDB from the region; however, this plant community does not occur on-site. Therefore, no impacts to sensitive plant communities would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on State or Federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No Impact. The project site is entirely developed and does not support any State- or federally protected wetlands; refer to Appendix B. Two artificial pond features associated with the former golf course are present on the project site; however, they have been abandoned since approximately 2015 and do not retain water. No impacts to State- or federally protected wetlands would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Incorporated. The project site is highly disturbed from the former golf course use and is surrounded on all sides by existing development. Further, the site offers no connectivity to any natural habitats that would serve as migration corridors, nor do adjacent areas. No impact to native wildlife movement or wildlife corridors would occur.

Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 and the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC). To maintain compliance with the MBTA and CFGC, clearance surveys are typically required during the breeding season (generally February 1 to August 31 but as early as January 1 for raptors) prior to any ground disturbance or vegetation removal activities to avoid direct and indirect impacts to active bird nests and/or nesting birds. Consequently, if an active bird nest is destroyed or if project activities result in indirect impacts to nesting birds (e.g., nest abandonment, loss of reproductive effort), it is considered "take" and is potentially punishable by fines and/or imprisonment. Although no nests were observed during the field survey, the vegetation within and adjacent to the project site provides suitable nesting opportunities for a variety of bird species. Disturbing or destroying active nests is a violation of the MBTA. In addition, nests and eggs are protected under CFGC Section 3503. The removal of vegetation supporting an active nest during the breeding season is considered a potentially significant impact. **Mitigation Measure BIO-1** would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

Moreover, the unmaintained palm trees around the perimeter of the project site have the potential to support maternity colonies of foliar roosting bats within the palm skirts (i.e., dead hanging fronds). To ensure there are no direct impacts to the species, **Mitigation Measure BIO-2** would require that tree trimming/removal activities occur outside of the bat maternity season (i.e., October 1 through February 28). If tree removal/trimming activities occur during the maternity season, which is March 1 through September 30, a pre-construction bat survey would be conducted by a qualified biologist within seven days prior to these activities. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-2**, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to **Mitigation Measures BIO-1** and **BIO-2** above.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact. The City of Palm Desert does not have a policy or ordinance protecting biological resources such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Therefore, there would be no conflict and no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?

Less than Significant Impact. The project would be consistent with the provisions of the CVMSHCP; refer to Response 4.4(a). Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

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4.5 Cultural Resources

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?				✓
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?		✓		
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon the *Cultural Resources Assessment for the Blue Fern Catavina Project in Palm Desert, Riverside County, California*, prepared by Michael Baker International, dated February 10, 2024; refer to Appendix C, *Cultural Resources Report*.

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

No Impact. A historic overview of the project area is provided in the Cultural Resources Report; refer to Appendix C. To evaluate the project's potential to support historic resources, a records search request was submitted to the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC). The search was conducted to identify previously recorded cultural resources and previously conducted cultural resources studies within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. A review was also conducted of the California Inventory of Historic Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, California Historical Landmarks, and documents and inventories from the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) including the lists of the National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources, California Historical Landmarks, and California Points of Historical Interest for Riverside County. An archaeological field survey of the project site was conducted on January 16, 2025. The survey assessed the potential for buried resources. Digital photographs were taken to document the environment of the project site; refer to Appendix C.

The SCIC records search revealed that 11 cultural resource studies were previously conducted within 0.5-mile of the project site, resulting in no cultural resources identified within the research radius. Of the previous studies, three have assessed portions of the project site for cultural resources, resulting in no cultural resources previously identified within the project boundaries.

During the field survey, the project site was carefully inspected for evidence of cultural resources. Ground visibility averaged approximately 55 to 60 percent within the project site boundaries. The perimeter of the project area is composed of sparse, hard-packed dirt, while the interior is predominantly loose, sandy soil.

No historic resources were identified within the project site boundaries during the record search and field survey conducted as part of the Cultural Resources Report. Accordingly, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5. No impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation. Prehistoric background information on the project area is provided in the Cultural Resources Report. Sensitivity for cultural resources consisting of archaeological sites is considered low to moderate. According to the Cultural Resources Report, no cultural resources, including prehistoric archaeological

resources or historic-period archaeological resources, were identified within the project site boundaries. However, one archaeological site was identified during the record search within the half-mile search radius.

Although findings were negative for archaeological resources on the surface of the project site, the potential exists for ground-disturbing activities to expose previously unrecorded cultural resources. To protect archaeological resources, **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would require retention of a qualified archaeologist to monitor all ground-disturbing activities and prepare of a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for construction personnel. Should any previously unrecorded cultural resources be discovered during ground disturbance, all construction-related activities within a 100-foot radius of the discovery would halt while the resource is evaluated for significance in consultation with the qualified archaeologist. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

CUL-1 **Qualified Archaeologist Retained.** Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the project applicant shall hire a qualified archaeologist to oversee the project. This will include implementation of an archaeological monitoring program during all ground-disturbing activities and that includes archaeological and Native American monitoring and cultural resource sensitivity training for construction personnel (i.e., Worker Environmental Awareness Program [WEAP]). The qualified archaeologist should prepare an archaeological monitoring and discovery plan that will apply to the entire project area and includes, at a minimum, a discussion of key personnel and their specific roles and responsibilities, archaeological monitoring methods, a discussion of archaeological resource classes that may be encountered during construction, and protocols for identifying, evaluating, treating, and curating archaeological resources that may be encountered. The plan will be prepared in cooperation with the City and [if applicable] the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. Should any cultural resources be discovered during implementation of the monitoring plan, the monitor(s) shall be authorized to temporarily halt all construction-related activities within a 100-foot radius of the discovery while the resource is evaluated for significance in consultation with the qualified archaeologist and [if applicable] the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. If the resource is determined significant, the qualified archaeologist should make recommendations to the City on measures that should be implemented to treat cultural resources in accordance with the protocols developed in the mitigation and discovery plan. No further grading shall occur in the discovery area until the City is notified by the qualified archaeologist that treatment has been completed.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Less Than Significant Impact. No evidence of human remains was identified as part of the Cultural Resources Report. Nonetheless, if human remains are found, those remains would require proper treatment, in accordance with applicable laws. State of California Public Resources Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 through 7055 describe the general provisions for human remains. Specifically, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires if any human remains are accidentally discovered during excavation of a site, the County Coroner shall be notified of the find immediately, and no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. As required by State law, if the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner shall notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC and shall have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains. Following compliance with applicable State laws, impacts related to the disturbance of human remains would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.6 Energy

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			✓	
b. Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results*.

Regulatory Framework

State

California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24)

Title 24, Part 6, also referred to as the California Energy Code, was codified in response to a legislative mandate to create uniform building codes to reduce California's energy consumption and provide energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. California's energy efficiency standards are updated on an approximate three-year cycle. The 2022 California Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6), commonly referred to as "Title 24," became effective on January 1, 2023. In general, Title 24 requires the design of building shells and building components to conserve energy. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2022 Title 24 standards encourage efficient electric heat pumps, establish electric-ready requirements for new homes, expand solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, strengthen ventilation standards, and more.

California Green Building Standards (CALGreen)

The California Green Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part 11), commonly referred to as the CALGreen Code, is a Statewide mandatory construction code that was developed and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission and the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The CALGreen Code requires new residential and commercial buildings to comply with mandatory measures under five topical areas: planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, and environmental quality. The CALGreen Code also provides voluntary tiers and measures that local governments may adopt to encourage or require additional measures in the five green building topics. The 2022 California Green Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11), commonly referred to as CALGreen, went into effect on January 1, 2023. CALGreen is the first-in-the-nation mandatory green buildings standards code. The California Building Standards Commission developed CALGreen to meet the State's landmark initiative Assembly Bill (AB) 32 goals, which established a comprehensive program of cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. CALGreen was developed to (1) reduce GHG emissions from buildings; (2) promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, and healthier places to live and work; (3) reduce energy and water consumption; and (4) respond to the environmental directives of the administration. CALGreen requires that new buildings employ water efficiency and conservation, increase building system efficiencies (e.g., lighting, heating/ventilation and air conditioning [HVAC], and plumbing fixtures), divert construction waste from landfills, and incorporate electric vehicles charging infrastructure. There is growing recognition among developers and retailers that

sustainable construction is not prohibitively expensive, and that there is a significant cost-savings potential in green building practices and materials.[12]

California Energy Commission Integrated Energy Policy Report

In 2002, the California State legislature adopted Senate Bill (SB) 1389, which requires the CEC to develop an integrated energy policy report every two years. SB 1389 requires the CEC to conduct assessments and forecasts of all aspects of energy industry supply, production, transportation, delivery and distribution, demand, and prices, and use these assessments and forecasts to develop energy policies that conserve resources, protect the environment, ensure energy reliability, enhance the State's economy, and protect public health and safety.

The CEC adopted the 2023 Integrated Energy Policy Report (2023 IEPR) on February 14, 2024. The 2023 IEPR provides the results of the CEC's assessments of a variety of energy issues facing California, many of which will require action if the State is to meet its climate, energy, air quality, and other environmental goals while maintaining reliability and controlling costs. The 2023 IEPR discusses speeding connection of clean resources to the electricity grid, the potential use of clean and renewable hydrogen, and the California Energy Demand Forecast to 2040.

Renewables Portfolio Standards

First established in 2002 under SB 1078, California's Renewables Portfolio Standards (RPS) requires retail sellers of electric services to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent by 2020 and 50 percent by 2030. SB 350, signed October 7, 2015, is the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015. The objectives of SB 350 are to (1) increase the procurement of electricity from renewable sources from 33 percent to 50 percent and (2) double the energy savings in electricity and natural gas final end uses of retail customers through energy efficiency and conservation. On September 10, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 100, which further increased California's RPS and requires retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities to procure eligible renewable electricity for 44 percent of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, and 60 percent by December 31, 2030, and states that CARB should plan for 100 percent eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources by December 31, 2045.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the CEC jointly implement the RPS program. The CPUC's responsibilities include:

1. Determining annual procurement targets and enforcing compliance;
2. Reviewing and approving each investor-owned utility's renewable energy procurement plan;
3. Reviewing contracts for RPS-eligible energy; and
4. Establishing the standard terms and conditions used in contracts for eligible renewable energy.

Local

City of Palm Desert General Plan

Applicable goals and policies related to energy from the General Plan Environmental Resources Element are listed below.

Goal 5. Climate Change: A resilient community that reduces its contribution to a changing climate and is prepared for the health and safety risks of climate change.

[12] U.S. Green Building Council, *Green Building Costs and Savings*, https://www.usgbc.org/articles/green-building-costs-and-savings, accessed January 28, 2025.

Policy 5.6. Climate-appropriate building types: Seek out and promote alternative building types that are more sensitive to the arid environment found in the Coachella Valley. Consider the use of courtyard housing and commercial buildings to provide micro-climates that are usable year-round, reducing the need for mechanically cooled spaces and reducing energy consumption.

Policy 5.12. Designing for warming temperatures: When reviewing development proposals, encourage applicants and designers to consider warming temperatures in the design of cooling systems.

Policy 5.14. Heat island reductions: Require heat island reduction strategies in new developments such as light-colored paving, permeable paving, rightsized parking requirements, vegetative cover and planting, substantial tree canopy coverage, and south and west side tree planting.

Policy 5.17. Efficiency incentives: Provide incentives for households to improve resource efficiency, such as rebate programs, and giveaways for items such as low-flow showerheads and electrical outlet insulation.

Goal 6. Energy: An energy efficient community that relies primarily on renewable and non-polluting energy sources.

Policy 6.1. Passive solar design: Require new buildings to incorporate energy efficient building and site design strategies for the desert environment that include appropriate solar orientation, thermal mass, use of natural daylight and ventilation, and shading.

Policy 6.2. Alternative energy: Continue to promote the incorporation of alternative energy generation (e.g., solar, wind, biomass) in public and private development.

Policy 6.4 Community development–subdivisions: When reviewing applications for new subdivisions, require all residences be oriented along an east-west access, minimizing western sun exposure, to maximize energy efficiency.

Goal 7. Green Building: Community building stock that demonstrates high environmental performance through green design.

Policy 7.4. Heat island reductions: Require heat island reduction strategies in new developments such as light-colored cool roofs, light-colored paving, permeable paving, right-sized parking requirements, water efficient vegetative cover and planting, substantial tree canopy coverage, south and west side water-efficient tree planting, and shaded asphalt paving.

Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

In 2022, the City prepared an Environmental Initiative Plan (EIP) which contains goals and strategies to address sustainability-related projects. In 2024, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments began working on a regional Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) which the City would be a beneficiary of. However, the CCAP has not been publicized and approved.

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less Than Significant Impact. CEQA Guidelines Appendix F is an advisory document that assists in determining whether a project will result in the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy. The analysis on Response 4.6(a) relies upon Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, which includes the following criteria to determine whether this threshold of significance is met:

- **Criterion 1:** The project's energy requirements and its energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the project including construction, operation, maintenance and/or removal. If appropriate, the energy intensiveness of materials may be discussed.

- **Criterion 2:** The effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies and on requirements for additional capacity.
- **Criterion 3:** The effects of the project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy.
- **Criterion 4:** The degree to which the project complies with existing energy standards.
- **Criterion 5:** The effects of the project on energy resources.
- **Criterion 6:** The project's projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives.

Quantification of the project's energy usage is presented and addresses Criterion 1. The discussion on construction-related energy use focuses on Criteria 2, 4, and 5. The discussion on operational energy use is divided into transportation energy demand and building energy demand. The transportation energy demand analysis discusses Criteria 2, 4, and 6, and the building energy demand analysis discusses Criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Project-Related Sources of Energy Consumption

This analysis focuses on three sources of energy that are relevant to the proposed project: electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel for vehicle trips and off-road equipment associated with project construction and operations. The analysis of operational electricity and natural gas usage is based on the California Emissions Estimator Model version 2022.1.1 (CalEEMod) modeling results for the project. The project's estimated electricity and natural gas consumption is based primarily on CalEEMod's default settings for Riverside County, and consumption factors provided by the Southern California Edison (SCE) and the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), the electricity and natural gas providers for the City and the project site. The results of the CalEEMod modeling are included in Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results*. The amount of operational fuel consumption was estimated using the CARB's EMFAC2021 website platform which provides projections for typical daily fuel usage in the County, and the project's annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT) outputs from CalEEMod. The estimated construction fuel consumption is based on the project's construction equipment list, timing/phasing, and hours of duration for construction equipment, as well as vendor, hauling, and construction worker trips.

The project's estimated energy consumption is summarized in Table 4.6-1, *Project and Countywide Energy Consumption*. As shown in Table 4.6-1, the project's operational energy usage at full buildout would constitute an approximate 0.0287 percent increase over Riverside County's typical annual electricity consumption and an approximate 0.0450 percent increase over Riverside County's typical annual natural gas consumption. The project's operational automotive fuel consumption at full buildout would constitute an approximately 0.1331 percent increase over the Riverside County's projected annual fuel consumption. The construction of the proposed project would be performed in five phases: Phase 1 – Backbone; Phases 2 and 3 – Southern Half; and Phases 4 and 5 – Northern Half. Phase 1 – Backbone would comprise of rough grading of the entire site and upgrading supporting infrastructure for the proposed project. Phase 1 would consist of demolition, grading, and paving activities. Phases 2 and 3 – Southern Half would involve the construction of the southern half of the proposed project and would consist of grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating activities. Phases 4 and 5 – Northern Half would involve the construction of the northern half of the proposed project and would consist of grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating activities. It should be noted that Phases 2 and 3 – Southern Half and Phases 4 and 5 – Northern Half would occur concurrently. The project's maximum projected construction on-road and off-road fuel consumption would increase the County's consumption by up to 0.0193 and 0.4554 percent, respectively (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 1**).

Table 4.6-1
Project and Countywide Energy Consumption

Energy Type	Project Annual Energy Consumption[1]	Riverside County Annual Energy Consumption[2]	Percentage Increase Countywide[2]
Electricity Consumption	5,099 MWh	17,780,573 MWh	0.0287%
Natural Gas Consumption	194,181 therms	431,052,392 therms	0.0450%
Operational Automotive Fuel Consumption[3]	1,195,425 gallons	898,401,359 gallons	0.1331%
Construction Phase 1[4]			
Construction Off-road Consumption	17,934 gallons	29,912,823 gallons	0.0600%
Construction On-road Consumption	3,686 gallons	938,863,421 gallons	0.0004%
Construction Phases 2 and 3[5]			
Construction Off-road Consumption	68,121 gallons	29,921,916 gallons	0.2277%
Construction On-road Consumption	66,823 gallons	928,346,483 gallons	0.0072%
Construction Phases 4 and 5[5]			
Construction Off-road Consumption	68,121 gallons	29,921,916 gallons	0.2277%
Construction On-road Consumption	112,005 gallons	928,346,483 gallons	0.0121%
Overlapping Construction Phases 2 through 5[5]			
Construction Off-road Consumption	136,242 gallons	29,921,916 gallons	0.4554%
Construction On-road Consumption	178,828 gallons	928,346,483 gallons	0.0193%

Notes:
1. As modeled in CalEEMod version 2022.1.1. Project fuel consumption calculated based on CalEEMod results. Countywide fuel consumption is from the CARB EMFAC2021 model and Off-Road Emissions Inventory.
2. The project increases in electricity and natural gas consumption are compared to the total consumption in the County in 2022, the latest year with available data.
3. The project's operational fuel consumption would be compared with the County's projected fuel consumption in 2030 (buildout year of the entire project).
4. The project increases in off-road fuel consumption (construction) was compared with the County's projected Mining and Construction Sector fuel consumption in 2026 (first year of construction for Phase 1). The project's increase in on-road fuel consumption (construction) was compared with the County's projected on-road fuel consumption in 2026.
5. The project increases in off-road fuel consumption (construction) was compared with the County's projected Mining and Construction Sector fuel consumption in 2027 (first year of construction for Phases 2-3 and Phases 4-5). The project's increase in on-road fuel consumption (construction) was compared with the County's projected on-road fuel consumption in 2027.

Source:
Riverside County electricity consumption data source: California Energy Commission, *Electricity Consumption by County*, http://www.ecdms. energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx, accessed January 21, 2025.
Riverside County natural gas consumption data source: California Energy Commission, *Gas Consumption by County*, http://www.ecdms.energy. ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx, accessed January 21, 2025.

Refer to Appendix A for assumptions used in this analysis.

Construction

During construction, the project would consume energy in two general forms: (1) the fuel energy consumed by construction vehicles and equipment; and (2) bound energy in construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass.

Fossil fuels used for construction vehicles and other energy-consuming equipment would be used during grading, paving, building construction, and architectural coatings. Fuel energy consumed during construction would be temporary and would not represent a significant demand on energy resources. In addition, some incidental energy conservation would occur during construction through compliance with State requirements that heavy-duty diesel equipment not in use for more than five minutes be turned off. Project construction equipment would also be required to comply with the latest U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and CARB engine emissions standards. These emissions standards require highly efficient combustion systems that maximize fuel efficiency and reduce unnecessary fuel consumption. Due to increasing transportation costs and fuel prices, contractors and owners have a strong financial incentive to avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 4**).

Substantial reductions in energy inputs for construction materials can be achieved by selecting green building materials composed of recycled materials that require less energy to produce than non-recycled materials.[13] The integration of green building materials can help reduce environmental impacts associated with the extraction, transport, processing, fabrication, installation, reuse, recycling, and disposal of these building industry source materials. The project-related incremental increase in the use of energy bound in construction materials such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes and manufactured or processed materials (e.g., lumber and gas) would not substantially increase demand for energy compared to overall local and regional demand for construction materials. As previously discussed, the proposed project would be constructed in three phases of which, Phase 1 would occur independently, and Phases 2 to 3 and Phases 4 to 5 would occur concurrently. As indicated in Table 4.6-1, the project's fuel consumption from off-road construction during Phase 1, Phases 2 to 3, and Phases 4 to 5 would be approximately 17,934 gallons, 68,121 gallons, and 68,121 gallons, respectively. The project's construction off-road fuel consumption would increase fuel use in the County by up to 0.2277 percent. The combined fuel consumption for off-road construction during Phases 2 through 5 would be 136,242 gallons, which represent a 0.4554 percent over the County's projected fuel consumption.

Also indicated in Table 4.6-1, the project's fuel consumption from on-road construction during Phase 1, Phases 2 to 3, and Phases 4 to 5 would be approximately 3,686 gallons, 66,823 gallons, and 112,005 gallons, respectively. This would represent an increase of up to 0.0121 percent over the County's projected fuel consumption. The combined fuel consumption for on-road construction during Phases 2 through 5 would be approximately 178,828 gallons, which represent a 0.0193 percent over the County's projected fuel consumption. It is noted that construction fuel use is temporary and would cease upon completion of construction activities. There are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in the region or State (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 5**). As such, construction would have a nominal effect on the local and regional energy supplies (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 2**). Therefore, construction fuel consumption would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than other similar development projects of this nature. As such, a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Operations

Transportation Energy Demand

Pursuant to the Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards and for revising existing standards. Compliance with Federal fuel economy standards is not determined for each individual vehicle model. Rather, compliance is determined based on each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of their vehicles produced for sale in the United States. Table 4.6-1 provides an estimate of the daily fuel consumed by vehicles traveling to and from the project site. Based on the *Scoping Agreement for Traffic Impact Study* prepared by Michael Baker International for the project, the proposed project would generate approximately 4,810 average daily trips. As indicated in Table 4.6-1, project operational daily trips are estimated to consume approximately 1,195,425 gallons of fuel per year, which would increase the County's projected automotive fuel consumption in 2030 by 0.1331 percent. The project does not propose any unusual features that would result in excessive long-term operational fuel consumption (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 2**).

The key drivers of transportation-related fuel consumption are job locations/commuting distance and many personal choices on when and where to drive for various purposes. Those factors are outside of the scope of the design of the proposed project. However, in compliance with CALGreen Code, all new one-family dwellings with attached private garages would require the installation of a listed raceway to accommodate a dedicated 208/240-volt branch circuit for the future installation of an EV charger. This project design feature would encourage and support the use of EVs within

[13] United States Energy Information Administration, *Energy and the environment explained, Recycling and energy*, https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/energy-and-the-environment/recycling-and-energy.php#:~:text=Making%20a%20product%20from%20recycled,material%20aluminum%20is%20made%20from, accessed January 21, 2025.

the proposed residential development and thus reduce the petroleum fuel consumption (**CEQA Appendix F – Criterion 4** and **Criterion 6**).

Therefore, fuel consumption associated with vehicle trips generated by the project would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary in comparison to other similar developments in the region. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Building Energy Demand

The CEC developed 2024 to 2040 forecasts for energy consumption and peak demand in support of the 2023 IEPR for each of the major electricity and natural gas planning areas and the State based on the economic and demographic growth projections. It should be noted that the gas forecast is updated every two years during the odd years and electricity forecast are updated every two years during the even years. Per the 2022 IEPR, CEC forecasted baseline electricity consumption grows at a rate of about 1.7 percent annually through 2040. Per the 2023 IEPR, natural gas consumption is forecasted to grow at a rate of about 0.2 percent annually through 2035. As shown in Table 4.6-1, operational energy consumption of the project would represent approximately 0.0287 percent increase in electricity consumption and 0.0450 percent increase in natural gas consumption over the current Countywide usage, which would be significantly below CEC's forecasts and the current Countywide usage. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the CEC's energy consumption forecasts and would not require additional energy capacity or supplies (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 2**). The project would also consume energy during the same time periods as other residential development. As a result, the project would not result in unique or more intensive peak or base period electricity demand (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 3**).

The project would be required to comply with the most current version of the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which provide minimum efficiency standards related to various building features, including appliances, water and space heating and cooling equipment, building insulation and roofing, and lighting. Compliance with the current 2022 Title 24 standards significantly reduces energy usage. The Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards are updated every three years and become more stringent between each update. The project would also install energy efficient appliances which would reduce overall energy consumption demands (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 4**).

Furthermore, the electricity provider, SCE, is subject to California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). The RPS requires investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total procurement by 2020 and to 60 percent of total procurement by 2030. Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources which are naturally replenished within a human timescale such as sunlight, wind, tides, waves, and geothermal heat. The increase in reliance of such energy resources further ensures that new development projects will not result in the waste of the finite energy resources. The project would install solar photovoltaics panels and have electrical infrastructure to support a future battery system on the proposed residences in compliance with 2022 Title 24 and CALGreen Code requirements (**CEQA Appendix F - Criterion 5**).

Therefore, the project would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of building energy during project operation, or preempt future energy development or future energy conservation. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Less than Significant Impact. The City currently does not have a plan pertaining to renewable energy or energy efficiency. The applicable State plans and policies for renewable energy and energy efficiency include the 2022 Title 24 standards, the 2022 CALGreen Code, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC's) Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan, and CEC's 2023 IEPR. The project would be required to comply with the latest Title 24 and CALGreen standards pertaining to building energy efficiency. Compliance with 2022 Title 24 standards and 2022 CALGreen Code

would ensure the project incorporates energy-efficient windows, insulation, lighting, and ventilation systems, which are consistent with the Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan strategies, the IEPR building energy efficiency recommendations, and General Plan goals and policies. Additionally, per the RPS, the project would utilize electricity provided by SCE that is composed of 33.2 percent renewable energy as of 2022 and would achieve at least 60 percent renewable energy by 2030.[14] It should be noted that Power Content Labels for the year 2023 or 2024 is not currently available.[15] In accordance with the 2022 Title 24 Standards and CALGreen Code requirements, the proposed project would install solar photovoltaic panels and its associated battery infrastructure. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[14] California Energy Commission, *Southern California Edison 2022 Power Content Label*, https://www.sce.com/sites/default/files/custom-files/PDF_Files/SCE_2022_Power_Content_Label_B%26W.pdf, accessed January 29, 2024.

[15] California Energy Commission, *Power Content Label*, https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/power-source-disclosure-program/power-content-label, accessed January 21, 2024.

4.7 Geology and Soils

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
1) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			✓	
2) Strong seismic ground shaking?			✓	
3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			✓	
4) Landslides?				✓
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			✓	
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on-or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			✓	
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?			✓	
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				✓
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			✓	

This section is based upon the *Updated Geotechnical Report Proposed Single- and Multi-Family Residential Developments Catavina Project 38105 Portola Avenue Palm Desert, Riverside County, California* (Geotechnical Investigation) prepared by Geotek, Inc., dated September 10, 2024; refer to Appendix D, *Geotechnical Investigation*.

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

1) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site, like the rest of Southern California, is located within a seismically active margin between the North American and Pacific tectonic plates. Faults that have historically produced earthquakes or show evidence of movement within the past 11,000 years are known as "active faults." According to the Geotechnical Investigation, no known active faults cross the project site, and the site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The closest active fault is the San Andreas fault zone located approximately 4.8 miles northeast of the project site.[16] Therefore, the potential for fault rupture on site is considered very low. A less than significant impact would occur.

[16] California Department of Conservation, *EQ Zapp: California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application*, https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/geohazards/eq-zapp, Accessed January 13, 2025.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

2) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Geotechnical Investigation, the project site is in a region of generally high seismicity (Southern California). As such, the project site is expected to experience strong ground motions from earthquakes on regional and/or local causative faults. However, active or potentially active faults are not known to exist on or in the immediate vicinity of the site. Nevertheless, in conformance with existing seismic design requirements of the California Building Code, the project would be subject to the site-specific seismic design recommendations identified in the Geotechnical Investigation to minimize the potential for damage and major injury during a seismic event. Modern buildings are designed to resist ground shaking through the use of shear panels, moment frames, and reinforcement. Conformance with the seismic design recommendations identified in the *Geotechnical Investigation* would ensure impacts related to ground shaking are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less Than Significant Impact. Liquefaction and seismically induced settlement or ground failure is generally related to strong seismic shaking events where the groundwater occurs at shallow depth (generally within 50 feet of the ground surface) or where lands are underlain by loose, cohesionless deposits. Liquefaction typically results in the loss of shear strength of a soil, which occurs due to the increase of pore water pressure caused by the rearrangement of soil particles induced by shaking or vibration. During liquefaction, soil strata behave similarly to a heavy liquid.

According to the Geotechnical Investigation, based on the presence of relatively dense dune sand deposits and lack of shallow groundwater, liquefaction risk at the project site is considered very low. A less than significant impact would occur.

4) Landslides?

No Impact. According to the Geotechnical Investigation, the site is not mapped within a State of California Seismic Hazard Zone for seismically induced landslides. Further, the site is considered as having a relatively flat terrain. Thus, the potential for seismically induced landslides is considered negligible. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less Than Significant Impact. The primary concern regarding soil erosion or loss of topsoil would be from construction activities associated with the project, which could expose soils to short-term erosion by wind and water. Soil disturbance would temporarily occur during earth-moving activities such as excavation and trenching for foundations and utilities, soil compaction, and grading. Disturbed soils would be susceptible to high rates of erosion from wind and rain, resulting in sediment transport via stormwater runoff from the project site. However, the project-specific SWPPP would contain Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize erosion.

The City's General Plan identifies the project site as having a very high wind erodibility rating. However, the project would be required to submit and implement a site-specific dust control mitigation plan as part of the grading permit process. This would minimize potential impacts caused by blowing dust and sand during construction. The project would also employ BMP during construction to control runoff from discharging from the site during project construction; refer to Section 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. Furthermore, the project would include new structures, paved surfaces, and landscaping that would assist in stabilizing ground surfaces and resist long-term erosion. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on-or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Responses 4.7(a)(3), 4.7(a)(4), and 4.7(d) for a discussion concerning liquefaction, landslides, and collapse (from expansive soils), respectively.

Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading is a phenomenon in which large blocks of intact, non-liquefied soil move down slope on a liquefied soil layer. Lateral spreading is often a regional event. For lateral spreading to occur, the liquefiable soil zone must be laterally continuous, unconstrained laterally, and free to move along sloping ground. According to the Geotechnical Investigation, the project site is not subject to seismic-related ground failure (i.e., liquefaction). As a result, the lateral spread is anticipated to be negligible. Impacts would be less than significant.

Subsidence

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, land subsidence occurs when large amounts of groundwater have been withdrawn from certain types of rocks, such as fine-grained sediments.[17] The rock compacts because the water is partly responsible for holding the ground up. When the water is withdrawn, the rocks fall in on itself. Events other than the removal of groundwater that can cause land subsidence include aquifer-system compaction, drainage of organic soils, underground mining, hydrocompaction, natural compaction, sinkholes, and thawing permafrost.

According to the General Plan EIR, it does not appear that expansive clays or soils exhibiting shrink-swell characteristics underlie the City. Further, as indicated in the Geotechnical Investigation, the project site does not support shallow groundwater. Accordingly, subsidence risk at the project site is low due to a lack of shallow ground water. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Less Than Significant Impact. Expansive soils are those that undergo volume changes as moisture content fluctuates, swelling substantially when wet or shrinking when dry. Soil expansion can damage structures by cracking foundations, causing settlement, and distorting structural elements. According to the Geotechnical Investigation, the onsite soils generally consist of dune sand deposits, and are considered to have a very low expansion index. In addition, compliance with the site-specific design recommendations identified in the Geotechnical Investigation would reduce potential impacts relative to expansive soils to less than significant levels. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. No septic tanks or alternative wastewater systems would be constructed as part of the project. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[17] U.S. Geological Survey, *Land Subsidence*, https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/land-subsidence, Accessed February 6, 2025.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. According to the Geotechnical Report, the project site is located within an area underlain by dune sand deposits. According to the Geotechnical Report, design cuts and fills of up to approximately five (5) feet below ground surface are anticipated to be required to bring the building pads to design grades. Cut and fill slopes over five (5) feet in height are not anticipated due to the relatively flat site terrain. As a result, it is unlikely that ground disturbing activities would uncover paleontological resources. Nonetheless, impacts to previously undiscovered paleontological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**, which requires paleontological monitoring and resource recovery if necessary. Further, implementation of General Plan Environmental Resources Element Policy 9.6 requires any paleontological artifacts found in the City or the Sphere of Influence to be reported to the City and temporarily loaned to local museums like the Western Science Center for Archaeology and Paleontology in Hemet. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** and General Plan Environmental Resources Element Policy 9.6, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measures:

GEO-1: Paleontological Monitoring and Resource Recovery. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the developer shall retain a qualified professional paleontologist to provide professional paleontological services, which shall include education of construction workers, onsite construction monitoring, and, if required, appropriate recovery, and reporting. Prior to ground disturbance, the qualified paleontologist shall conduct a pre-construction worker environmental awareness training. The qualified paleontologist shall conduct monitoring during ground disturbance in previously undisturbed native soils, particularly where sediments of high paleontological sensitivity are present. If, after excavation begins, the qualified paleontologist determines that the sediments are not likely to produce fossil resources, monitoring efforts shall be reduced or shall cease. Upon completion of earthwork, a report summarizing monitoring results and any discoveries shall be submitted to the City of Palm Desert.

If significant fossils are encountered, the developer shall notify the City of Palm Desert and work shall halt or be redirected away from the find until the fossils are evaluated by the qualified paleontologist. The qualified paleontologist shall develop a plan of mitigation which may include full-time monitoring, salvage excavation, scientific removal of the find, removal of sediment from around the specimen in a laboratory, research to identify and categorize the find, curation of the find in a local qualified repository, and preparation of a report summarizing the find for review and approval by the City of Palm Desert.

4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			✓	
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results*.

Global Climate Change

California is a substantial contributor of global greenhouse gases (GHGs), emitting over 371.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$) in 2022.[18] Methane (CH_4) is also an important GHG that potentially contributes to global climate change. GHGs are global in their effect, which is to increase the earth's ability to absorb heat in the atmosphere. As primary GHGs have a long lifetime in the atmosphere, accumulate over time, and are generally well-mixed, their impact on the atmosphere is mostly independent of the point of emission. Every nation emits GHGs and as a result makes an incremental cumulative contribution to global climate change; therefore, global cooperation will be required to reduce the rate of GHG emissions enough to slow or stop the human-caused increase in average global temperatures and associated changes in climatic conditions.

The impact of human activities on global climate change is apparent in the observational record. Air trapped by ice has been extracted from core samples taken from polar ice sheets to determine the global atmospheric variation of CO_2, CH_4, and nitrous oxide (N_2O) from before the start of industrialization (approximately 1750), to over 650,000 years ago. For that period, it was found that CO_2 concentrations ranged from 180 to 300 parts per million (ppm). For the period from approximately 1750 to the present, global CO_2 concentrations increased from a pre-industrialization period concentration of 280 to 379 ppm in 2005, with the 2005 value far exceeding the upper end of the pre-industrial period range. As of January 2025, the highest monthly average concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere was recorded at 426.10 ppm.[19]

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) constructed several emission trajectories of GHGs needed to stabilize global temperatures and climate change impacts. It concluded that a stabilization of GHGs at 400 to 450 ppm carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) concentration is required to keep global mean warming below 2 degrees Celsius (^oC), which in turn is assumed to be necessary to avoid dangerous climate change.

Regulatory Framework

Federal

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) constructed several emission trajectories of GHGs needed to stabilize global temperatures and climate change impacts. It concluded that a stabilization of GHGs at 400 to 450 ppm carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) concentration is required to keep global mean warming below 2 degrees Celsius (^oC), which in turn is assumed to be necessary to avoid dangerous climate change.

[18] California Air Resources Board, *California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2022,* https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-09/nc-2000_2022_ghg_inventory_trends.pdf, accessed January 9, 2025.

[19] Scripps Institution of Oceanography, *Carbon Dioxide Concentration at Mauna Loa Observatory*, https://scripps.ucsd.edu/programs/keelingcurve/, accessed January 23, 2025.

State

Various Statewide and local initiatives to reduce the State's contribution to GHG emissions have raised awareness that, even though the various contributors to and consequences of global climate change are not yet fully understood, global climate change is under way, and there is a real potential for severe adverse environmental, social, and economic effects in the long term.

Assembly Bill 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006). California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32; California Health and Safety Code Division 25.5, Sections 38500 - 38599). AB 32 establishes regulatory, reporting, and market mechanisms to achieve quantifiable reductions in GHG emissions and establishes a cap on Statewide GHG emissions. AB 32 requires that Statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. AB 32 specifies that regulations adopted in response to AB 1493 should be used to address GHG emissions from vehicles. However, AB 32 also includes language stating that if the AB 1493 regulations cannot be implemented, then the California Air Resources Board (CARB) should develop new regulations to control vehicle GHG emissions under the authorization of AB 32.

Executive Order S-3-05. Executive Order S-3-05 set forth a series of target dates by which Statewide emissions of GHGs would be progressively reduced, as follows:

- By 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels;
- By 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and
- By 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

Senate Bill 32. Signed into law in September 2016, SB 32 codifies the 2030 GHG reduction target in Executive Order B-30-15 (40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030). The bill authorizes CARB to adopt an interim GHG emissions level target to be achieved by 2030.

CARB Scoping Plan. On December 11, 2008, CARB adopted the *Climate Change Scoping Plan* (Scoping Plan), which functions as a roadmap to achieve GHG reductions in California required by AB 32 through subsequently enacted regulations. The Scoping Plan contains the main strategies California will implement to reduce GHG emissions by 174 million metric tons (MT), or approximately 30 percent, from the State's projected 2020 emissions level of 596 million $MTCO_2e$ under a business as usual (BAU)[20] scenario. This is a reduction of 42 million $MTCO_2e$, or almost ten percent, from 2002 to 2004 average emissions, but requires the reductions in the face of population and economic growth through 2020.

The Scoping Plan calculates 2020 BAU emissions as the emissions that would be expected to occur in the absence of any GHG reduction measures. The 2020 BAU emissions estimate was derived by projecting emissions from a past baseline year using growth factors specific to each of the different economic sectors (e.g., transportation, electrical power, commercial and residential, industrial, etc.). CARB used three-year average emissions, by sector, for 2002 to 2004 to forecast emissions to 2020. The measures described in the Scoping Plan are intended to reduce the projected 2020 BAU to 1990 levels, as required by AB 32.

AB 32 requires CARB to update the Scoping Plan at least once every five years. CARB adopted the first major update to the Scoping Plan on May 22, 2014. The updated Scoping Plan identifies the actions California has already taken to reduce GHG emissions and focuses on areas where further reductions could be achieved to help meet the 2020 target established by AB 32. The Scoping Plan update also looks beyond 2020 toward the 2050 goal, established in Executive Order S-3-05, and observes that "a mid-term statewide emission limit will ensure that the State stays on course to meet our long-term goal."

[20] "Business as Usual" refers to emissions that would be expected to occur in the absence of GHG reductions; refer to http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/bau.htm. Note that there is significant controversy as to what BAU means. In determining the GHG 2020 limit, CARB used the above as the "definition." It is broad enough to allow for design features to be counted as reductions.

On January 20, 2017, CARB released the proposed Second Update to the Scoping Plan, which identifies the State's post-2020 reduction strategy. The Second Update was finalized in November 2017 and approved on December 14, 2017, and reflects the 2030 target of a 40 percent reduction below 1990 levels, set by Executive Order B-30-15 and codified by SB 32. The 2017 Scoping Plan Update establishes a new Statewide emissions limit of 260 million $MTCO_2e$ for the year 2030, which corresponds to a 40 percent decrease in 1990 levels by 2030.

On December 15, 2022, CARB released the *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan), which identifies the strategies achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier. The 2022 Scoping Plan contains the GHG reductions, technology, and clean energy mandated by statutes. The 2022 Scoping Plan was developed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 through a substantial reduction in fossil fuel dependence, while at the same time increasing deployment of efficient non-combustion technologies and distribution of clean energy. The plan would also reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) and would include mechanical CO_2 capture and sequestration actions, as well as emissions and sequestration from natural and working lands and nature-based strategies. Under 2022 Scoping Plan, by 2045, California aims to cut GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels, reduce smog-forming air pollution by 71 percent, reduce the demand for liquid petroleum by 94 percent compared to current usage, improve health and welfare, and create millions of new jobs. This plan also builds upon current and previous environmental justice efforts to integrate environmental justice directly into the plan, to ensure that all communities can reap the benefits of this transformational plan. Specifically, this plan:

- Identifies a path to keep California on track to meet its SB 32 GHG reduction target of at least 40 percent below 1990 emissions by 2030.
- Identifies a technologically feasible, cost-effective path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and a reduction in anthropogenic emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels.
- Focuses on strategies for reducing California's dependency on petroleum to provide consumers with clean energy options that address climate change, improve air quality, and support economic growth and clean sector jobs.
- Integrates equity and protecting California's most impacted communities as driving principles throughout the document.
- Incorporates the contribution of natural and working lands (NWL) to the State's GHG emissions, as well as their role in achieving carbon neutrality.
- Relies on the most up-to-date science, including the need to deploy all viable tools to address the existential threat that climate change presents, including carbon capture and sequestration, as well as direct air capture.
- Evaluates the substantial health and economic benefits of taking action.
- Identifies key implementation actions to ensure success.

<u>Local</u>

2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy

On September 3, 2020, the Regional Council of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) formally adopted the Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2020-2045 RTP/SCS). The SCS portion of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS highlights strategies for the region to reach the regional target of reducing GHGs from autos and light-duty trucks by 8 percent per capita by 2020, and 19 percent by 2035 (compared to 2005 levels). Specially, these strategies are to:

- Focus growth near destinations and mobility options;
- Promote diverse housing choices;
- Leverage technology innovations;
- Support implementation of sustainability policies; and
- Promote a green region.

Furthermore, the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS discusses a variety of land use tools to help achieve the State-mandated reductions in GHG emissions through reduced per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Some of these tools include center focused placemaking, focusing on priority growth areas, job centers, transit priority areas, as well as high quality transit areas and green regions.

The most recent 2024-2050 RTP/SCS was adopted by SCAG's Regional Council in April 2024. The 2024-2050 RTP/SCS outlines a vision for a more resilient and equitable future, with investment, policies, and strategies for achieving the region's shared goals through 2050. The 2024-2050 RTP/SCS sets forth a forecasted regional development pattern which, when integrated with the transportation network, measures, and policies, will reduce GHG emissions from automobiles and light-duty trucks and achieve the GHG emissions reduction target for the region set by the CARB. In addition, the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS is supported by a combination of transportation and land use strategies that outline how the region can achieve California's GHG-emission-reduction goals and federal Clean Air Act requirements. These are articulated in a set of Regional Strategic Investments, Regional Planning Policies, and Implementation Strategies. The Regional Planning Policies are a resource for County Transportation Commissions (CTCs) and local jurisdictions, who can refer to specific policies to demonstrate alignment with the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS when seeking resources from state or federal programs. The Implementation Strategies articulate priorities for SCAG efforts in fulfilling or going beyond the Regional Planning Policies.[21] While SCAG has adopted the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, CARB has not yet certified it or approved SCAG's GHG emissions reduction calculations.

City of Palm Desert General Plan

Applicable goals and policies related to GHG reduction from the General Plan Environmental Resources Element are listed below.

Goal 5. Climate Change: A resilient community that reduces its contribution to a changing climate and is prepared for the health and safety risks of climate change.

> **Policy 5.2. GHG reductions:** Promote land use and development patterns that reduce the community's dependence on, and length of, automobile.
>
> **Policy 5.3. Existing GHG emissions:** Work with community members and businesses to support their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
>
> **Policy 5.16. Reducing GHG emissions:** In consulting with applicants and designing new facilities, prioritize the selection of green building design features that enhance the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Goal 8. Air Quality: A city with limited sources of air pollution.

> **Policy 8.4. Electric vehicles:** Encourage the use of electric vehicles (EV), including golf carts and Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEV), by encouraging developments to provide EV and NEV charging stations, street systems, and other infrastructure that support the use of EVs. Similarly, encourage the use of renewable energy sources to power EV plug-in stations.
>
> **Policy 8.5. Construction-related emissions:** Require construction activities, including on-site building and the transport of materials, to limit emissions and dust.

Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

In 2022, the City prepared an Environmental Initiative Plan (EIP) which contains goals and strategies to address sustainability-related projects. In 2024, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments began working on a regional

[21] Southern California Association of Governments, Connect SoCal: A Plan for Navigating to a Brighter Future (2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy), adopted April 4, 2024.

Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) which the City would be a beneficiary of. However, the CCAP has not yet been publicized and approved.

Thresholds of Significance

On September 28, 2010, air quality experts serving on the SCAQMD GHG CEQA Significance Threshold Stakeholder Working Group recommended an interim screening level numeric bright-line threshold of 3,000 metric tons of CO_2e annually and an efficiency-based threshold of 4.8 metric tons of CO_2e per service population (residents plus employees) per year in 2020 and 3.0 metric tons of CO_2e per service population per year in 2035.[22] However, the bright-line threshold was based on the State's GHG emissions reduction goal effective in 2010, which has been outdated, and the SCAQMD never formally adopted the bright-line threshold. Similarly, the City has not adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing impacts related to GHG emissions nor has any other State or regional agency adopted a numerical significance threshold for assessing GHG emissions that is applicable to the proposed project. Since there is no applicable adopted or accepted numerical threshold of significance for GHG emissions, the methodology for evaluating the project's impacts related to GHG emissions focuses on its consistency with Statewide, regional, and local plans adopted for the purpose of reducing and/or mitigating GHG emissions. This evaluation of consistency with such plans is the sole basis for determining the significance of the project's GHG-related impacts on the environment.

Notwithstanding, for informational purposes, the analysis also calculates the amount of GHG emissions that would be attributable to the project using recommended air quality models, as described below. The primary purpose of quantifying the project's GHG emissions is to satisfy CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a), which calls for a good-faith effort to describe and calculate emissions. However, the significance of the project's GHG emissions impacts are not based on the amount of GHG emissions resulting from the project.

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Project-related GHG emissions include emissions from direct and indirect sources. Direct project-related GHG emissions include emissions from construction activities, area sources, mobile sources, and refrigerants, while indirect sources include emissions from energy consumption, water demand, and solid waste generation. The California Emissions Estimator Model version 2022.1.1 (CalEEMod) was used to calculate project-related GHG emissions. Table 4.8-1, *Estimated Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, presents the estimated CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, and refrigerant emissions associated with the proposed project; refer to Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results* for the CalEEMod outputs.

[22] In Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Association of Governments (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, the Supreme Court held that the EIR prepared for the San Diego Association of Governments' 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy did not need to include an analysis of the Plan's consistency with GHG emission reduction goals of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Table 4.8-1
Estimated Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Source	CO_2 MT/year[1]	CH_4 MT/year[1]	N_2O MT/year[1]	Refrigerants MT/year[1]	CO_2e MT/year[1]
Direct Emissions					
Construction (amortized over 30 years)[2]	120.98	<0.01	<0.01	0.06	122.46
Area Source	6.76	<0.01	<0.01	0.00	6.79
Mobile Source	7,655.00	0.26	0.34	7.21	7,771.00
Refrigerants	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.26	1.26
Total Direct Emissions[3]	*7,781.81*	*0.26*	*0.34*	*8.53*	*7,901.51*
Indirect Emissions					
Energy	2,261.00	0.17	0.01	0.00	2,268.00
Solid Waste	44.60	4.46	0.00	0.00	156.00
Water Demand	44.40	0.72	0.02	0.00	67.70
Total Indirect Emissions[3]	*2,350.00*	*5.35*	*0.03*	*0.00*	*2,491.70*
Total Project-Related Emissions[3]	***10,393.21 $MTCO_2e$/year***				

Notes: MT/year = metric tons per year
1. Emissions calculated using California Emissions Estimator Model Version 2022.1 (CalEEMod) computer model.
2. Combined GHG emissions of the Catavina Residential Phases 1 through 5 construction CalEEMod runs.
3. Totals may be slightly off due to rounding.

Refer to Appendix A, for detailed model input/output data.

Direct Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

Construction Emissions. Construction GHG emissions are typically summed and amortized over the lifetime of the project (assumed to be 30 years), then added to the operational emissions.[23] As shown in Table 4.8-1, the proposed project would result in 122.46 $MTCO_2e$ per year construction emissions when amortized over 30 years (or a total of 3,644.8 $MTCO_2e$ when combining construction Phases 1 through 5 GHG emissions).

Area Source. Area source emissions were calculated using CalEEMod and project-specific land use data. Project-related area sources include natural gas consumption for space heating and exhaust emissions from landscape maintenance equipment, such as lawnmowers, shedders/grinders, blowers, trimmers, chain saws, and hedge trimmers used to maintain the landscaping of the site. The project would utilize all electric landscaping equipment; however, as a conservative analysis, the CalEEMod modeling does not take this feature into account. The project would directly result in 6.79 $MTCO_2e$ per year from area source emissions; refer to Table 4.8-1.

Mobile Source. CalEEMod relies upon trip generation rates from the *Scoping Agreement for Traffic Impact Study* prepared by Michael Baker International for the project, and project specific land use data to calculate mobile source emissions. Based upon the trip generation rates, the proposed project would generate 4,810 average daily trips. The project would result in approximately 7,771.00 $MTCO_2e$ per year of mobile source generated GHG emissions; refer to Table 4.8-1.

Refrigerants. Refrigerants are substances used in equipment for air conditioning and refrigeration. Most of the refrigerants used today are HFCs or blends thereof, which can have high GWP values. All equipment that uses refrigerants has a charge size (i.e., quantity of refrigerant the equipment contains), and an operational refrigerant leak rate, and each refrigerant has a GWP that is specific to that refrigerant. CalEEMod quantifies refrigerant emissions from leaks during regular operation and routine servicing over the equipment lifetime and then derives average annual emissions from the lifetime estimate. The proposed project would result in 1.26 $MTCO_2e$ per year of GHG emissions from refrigerants; refer Table 4.8-1.

[23] The project lifetime is based on the standard 30-year assumption of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast Air Quality Management District, *Draft Guidance Document – Interim CEQA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Significance Threshold*, October 2008).

Indirect Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

Energy Consumption. Energy consumption emissions were calculated using CalEEMod and project-specific land use data. Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas (SCG) would provide electricity and natural gas to the project site. The project would install energy efficient appliance which would reduce overall energy consumption. However, as a conservative analysis, this feature was not accounted for in the modeling. The project would indirectly result in 2,268.00 $MTCO_2e$ per year due to energy consumption; refer to Table 4.8-1.

Solid Waste. Solid waste associated with operations of the proposed project would result in 156.00 $MTCO_2e$ per year; refer to Table 4.8-1.

Water Demand. The project operations would result in a demand of approximately 37.6 million gallons of water per year. It should be noted that the project would incorporate features such as low-flow fixtures, water efficient irrigation, and drought tolerant landscaping which would reduce water demand. However, as a conservative analysis, these features were not accounted for in CalEEMod. Emissions from indirect energy impacts due to water supply would result in 67.70 $MTCO_2e$ per year; refer to Table 4.8-1.

Total Project-Related Sources of Greenhouse Gases

As shown in Table 4.8-1, the total amount of project-related GHG emissions from direct and indirect sources combined would total 10,393.21 $MTCO_2e$ per year.

Consistency with Applicable GHG Plans, Policies, or Regulations

The GHG plan consistency for the project is based on the project's consistency with the CARB 2022 Scoping Plan, the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and applicable goals and policies from the City's General Plan. The 2022 Scoping Plan describes the approach the State will take to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. The SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes strategies for the region to reach the regional target of reducing GHG from transportation sector. The City's General Plan contains goals and policies that would help implement energy efficient measures and would subsequently reduce GHG emissions within the City.

Consistency with the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan

The 2022 Scoping Plan identifies reduction measures necessary to achieve the goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier. Actions that reduce GHG emissions are identified for each AB 32 inventory sector. Provided in Table 4.8-2, *Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan: AB 32 GHG Inventory Sectors*, is an evaluation of applicable reduction actions/strategies by emissions source category to determine how the project would be consistent with or exceed reduction actions/strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Table 4.8-2
Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan: AB 32 Inventory Sectors

Actions and Strategies	Project Consistency Analysis
Smart Growth / Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT): Reduce VMT per capita to 25% below 2019 levels by 2030, and 30% below 2019 levels by 2045	**Consistent**. The proposed project would comply with the CALGreen standards which require the installation of a listed raceway to accommodate a dedicated 208/240-volt branch circuit for the future installation of an electric vehicle (EV) charger. Installation of EV chargers would encourage EV use as an alternative mode of transportation from traditional internal combustion vehicles. Additionally, Portola Avenue has a striped bicycle lane in both directions which encourages cycling. The site is also located near existing commercial uses (i.e., commercial retail, restaurants, and grocery stores) to the south. Additionally, the project would be near public transportation stops serviced by the SunLine Transit Agency. These features would promote alternative modes of transportation to reduce VMT.
New Residential and Commercial Buildings: All electric appliances beginning 2026 (residential) and 2029 (commercial), contributing to 6 million heat pumps installed statewide by 2030	**Consistent.** The project is expected to consist of natural gas heating and/or cooking on-site. The City of Palm Desert has not adopted an ordinance or program limiting the use of natural gas for on-site cooking and/or heating. However, if adopted, the project would comply with the applicable goals or policies limiting the use of natural gas equipment in the future. Furthermore, the project would install energy efficient appliances.
Construction Equipment: Achieve 25% of energy demand electrified by 2030 and 75% electrified by 2045	**Consistent.** It should be noted that project construction would be completed in 2030. As such, the project would not be required to have 25 percent of construction equipment energy demand be electrified. The City of Palm Desert has not adopted an ordinance or program requiring electricity-powered construction equipment which would be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan. However, if adopted, the project would comply with the applicable goals or policies requiring the use of electric construction equipment in the future.
Non-combustion Methane Emissions: Divert 75% of organic waste from landfills by 2025	**Consistent**. SB 1383 establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. The law establishes an additional target that not less than 20 percent of currently disposed edible food is recovered for human consumption by 2025. The project would comply with local and regional regulations and recycle or compost 75 percent of waste by 2025 pursuant to SB 1383.
Source: California Air Resources Board, *2022 Scoping Plan*, November 16, 2022.	

Consistency with the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

As mentioned above, the latest 2024-2050 RTP/SCS (Connect SoCal 2024) was adopted on April 4, 2024. However, CARB concluded that the technical methodology SCAG used to quantify the GHG emission reductions for the Connect SoCal 2024 does not operate accurately.[24] SCAG resubmitted the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Submittal Package for CARB's review in June 2024. Review by CARB is limited to acceptance or rejection of SCAG's determination that its SCS would, if implemented, achieve the region's GHG emission reduction target. If CARB rejects SCAG's determination of meeting the GHG emission target, SCAG will need to revise the SCS or adopt an alternative planning strategy demonstrating the ability to achieve the target. As such, until CARB makes the decision, Connect SoCal 2024 is not a fully adopted document and is potentially subject to further updates, especially from the GHG reduction perspective of the methods and assumptions of the calculation of Auto Operating Costs (AOC)[25], induced travel, electric vehicle incentives, job center parking and parking deregulation, off-model strategy assumptions, and

[24] California Air Resources Board, *RE: CARB Review of Southern California Association of Governments' 2024 SCS Senate Bill 375 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Draft Technical Methodology*, March 29, 2024, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-04/SCAG%20memo%20final.pdf, accessed January 9, 2025.

[25] AOC is used as key variable across several major model components of the travel demand model, such as vehicle ownership, destination choice, and mode choice. This parameter represents the expenses associated with the usage of vehicles, expressed in cents per mile or dollar per mile. AOC plays a pivotal role as a fundamental parameter within the travel demand model.

emissions factors. As CARB has not made the decision at the time of preparation of this document, the consistency analysis relies upon the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. Table 4.8-3, *Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS* shows the project's consistency with these five strategies found within the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. As shown therein, the proposed project would be consistent with the GHG emission reduction strategies contained in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.

Table 4.8-3
Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
Focus Growth Near Destinations and Mobility Options		
• Emphasize land use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to work, educational and other destinations.	**Center Focused Placemaking, Priority Growth Areas (PGA), Job Centers, High Quality Transit Areas (HQTAs), Transit Priority Areas (TPA), Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs), Livable Corridors, Spheres of Influence (SOIs), Green Region, Urban Greening.**	**Consistent.** The proposed project would construct 546 single-family residences near existing residential uses. The proposed project is also located near various bus stops along the SunLine Transit Agency Route 4. The proposed project would facilitate multimodal access to work through its proximity to existing public transportation. Moreover, Portola Avenue has a striped bicycle lane in both directions. Further, the project site would be in a pedestrian friendly area as it is located within walking distance to existing grocery stores, commercial retails, and restaurants to the south.
• Focus on a regional jobs/housing balance to reduce commute times and distances and expand job opportunities near transit and along center-focused main streets.		**Consistent.** The proposed residential development would be surrounded by existing residential developments. The proposed project is also located within proximity to commercial uses to the south. The project would also be near job opportunities that may be available from developments along the major street (County Club Drive) and close to surrounding residential units.
• Plan for growth near transit investments and support implementation of first/last mile strategies.		**Consistent**. The proposed project is located within proximity to existing bus stops to the east serviced by the SunLine Transit Agency. Additionally, the project is located within walking distances to existing destinations to the south that residents may potentially visit, such as restaurants, other commercial retail uses, and grocery stores. The proximity to existing destinations and the project's features (proximity to public transit) would encourage guests to use alternative modes of transportation.
• Promote the redevelopment of underperforming retail developments and other outmoded nonresidential uses.		**Not Applicable**. The proposed project is not a retail or nonresidential development.
• Prioritize infill and redevelopment of underutilized land to accommodate new growth, increase amenities and connectivity in existing neighborhoods.		**Consistent**. The development of the proposed project would revitalize underutilized land with a new residential community.
• Encourage design and transportation options that reduce the reliance on and number of solo car trips (this could include mixed uses or locating and orienting close to existing destinations).		**Consistent**. The project is located less than one mile from multiple bus stops serviced by the SunLine Transit Agency. The project site is also located within walking distances to existing destinations. Moreover, Portola Avenue have striped bicycle lanes in both directions. As such, the proposed project would include features that would reduce solo car trips and would be located near existing destinations (food, retail, and commercial destinations).

Table 4.8-3, continued

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
• Identify ways to "right size" parking requirements and promote alternative parking strategies (e.g., shared parking or smart parking).		**Consistent.** The proposed project would provide private parking within garages and would not provide public parking.
Promote Diverse Housing Choices		
• Preserve and rehabilitate affordable housing and prevent displacement.	**PGA, Job Centers, HQTAs, NMA, TPAs, Livable Corridors, Green Region, Urban Greening.**	**Not Applicable**. The proposed project would not disturb or displace existing affordable housing units.
• Identify funding opportunities for new workforce and affordable housing development.		**Not Applicable**. This strategy only pertains to governmental agencies and would not be applicable to development projects.
• Create incentives and reduce regulatory barriers for building context sensitive accessory dwelling units to increase housing supply.		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's efforts in promoting accessory dwelling units.
Leverage Technology Innovations		
• Promote low emission technologies such as neighborhood electric vehicles, shared rides hailing, car sharing, bike sharing and scooters by providing supportive and safe infrastructure such as dedicated lanes, charging and parking/drop-off space.	**HQTA, TPAs, NMA, Livable Corridors.**	**Consistent**. The proposed project would comply with the CALGreen standards which require the installation of a listed raceway to accommodate a dedicated 208/240-volt branch circuit for the future installation of an EV charger. This feature would encourage future residents to utilize EVs for transportation. The project is also located near existing bicycle lanes and bus stops serviced by SunLine Transit Agency. Incorporation of the features and technology would reduce overall GHG emissions from transportation related emissions.
• Improve access to services through technology—such as telework and telemedicine as well as other incentives such as a "mobility wallet," an app-based system for storing transit and other multi-modal payments.		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's support on technology which may reduce VMT or allow for easier access to transportation options.
• Identify ways to incorporate "micro-power grids" in communities, for example solar energy, hydrogen fuel cell power storage and power generation		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's support on promoting "micro-power grids."
Support Implementation of Sustainability Policies		
• Pursue funding opportunities to support local sustainable development implementation projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions	**Center Focused Placemaking, PGA, Job Centers, HQTAs, TPA, NMAs, Livable Corridors, SOIs, Green Region, Urban Greening.**	**Consistent**. While this strategy is focused on local governments, agencies, and organizations' actions to support the implementation of sustainability policies, the project would participate in opportunities provided by these agencies that would support sustainability. For example, the proposed project would have the option to participate in programs and rebates provided by Southern California Edison that promotes sustainability.
• Support statewide legislation that reduces barriers to new construction and that incentivizes development near transit corridors and stations		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's support of statewide legislation.

Table 4.8-3, continued

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
• Support local jurisdictions in the establishment of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), or other tax increment or value capture tools to finance sustainable infrastructure and development projects, including parks and open space		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's support of statewide legislation.
• Work with local jurisdictions/ communities to identify opportunities and assess barriers to implement sustainability strategies		**Consistent**. The project would work alongside the City of Palm Desert and SCE in implementing required sustainability programs and/or optional rebate programs.
• Enhance partnerships with other planning organizations to promote resources and best practices in the SCAG region		**Not Applicable.** This strategy focuses on SCAG's support with local planning organizations.
• Continue to support long range planning efforts by local jurisdictions		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's support with local planning organizations.
Promote a Green Region		
• Support development of local climate adaptation and hazard mitigation plans, as well as project implementation that improves community resiliency to climate change and natural hazards	**Green Region, Urban Greening, Greenbelts and Community Separators.**	**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's support with local planning organizations.
• Support local policies for renewable energy production, reduction of urban heat islands and carbon sequestration		**Consistent**. The proposed project would include landscaping and landscaped open space which would reduce the urban heat island effect.
• Integrate local food production into the regional landscape		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on incorporation of food production (community gardens).
• Promote more resource efficient development focused on conservation, recycling and reclamation		**Consistent**. As discussed, the proposed project would incorporate a variety of project design features focused on sustainability and conservation such as low flow water fixtures, water-efficiency irrigation, install drought tolerant landscape, and energy efficient appliances. The project would also comply with local and regional regulations for recycling and composting; refer to Table 4.8-2.
• Preserve, enhance and restore regional wildlife connectivity		**Not Applicable**. The project is located within an urbanized and built environment.
• Reduce consumption of resource areas, including agricultural land		**Not Applicable**. The project is located within an urbanized and built environment. Project development would not remove any agricultural land.
• Identify ways to improve access to public park space		**Not Applicable**. This strategy focuses on SCAG's cooperation with local agencies in supporting accessible public parks.

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, *2020-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy – Connect SoCal*, September 3, 2020.

Consistency with the City of Palm Desert General Plan

The General Plan Environmental Resources Element includes goals and policies that promote GHG reduction within the City. The project's consistency with these goals and policies is discussed in Table 4.8-4, *Consistency with the City of Palm Desert General Plan*. As depicted in Table 4.8-4, the proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan.

Table 4.8-4
Consistency with the City of Palm Desert General Plan

Goals and Policies	Project Consistency
Goal 5. Climate Change: A resilient community that reduces its contribution to a changing climate and is prepared for the health and safety risks of climate change	
Policy 5.2. GHG reductions: Promote land use and development patterns that reduce the community's dependence on, and length of, automobile.	**Consistent.** The proposed project is located near other residential uses and is within walking distance of commercial uses to the south (i.e., commercial retail, restaurants, and grocery stores). The proximity to commercial uses would encourage residents to use alternative modes of transportation (walking and cycling) to such destinations. Additionally, Portola Avenue, east of the project site, includes striped bicycle lanes. Lastly, the project site is located near the existing bus Route 4 serviced by SunLine Transit Agency.
Policy 5.3. Existing GHG emissions: Work with community members and businesses to support their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	**Consistent.** This policy is focused on the City's effort in reducing GHG emissions through collaboration with community members and businesses. Nevertheless, the residents of the proposed project would work alongside the City and SCE in rebates and programs that promote sustainability, thereby reducing overall GHG emissions during operations.
Policy 5.16. Reducing GHG emissions: In consulting with applicants and designing new facilities, prioritize the selection of green building design features that enhance the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.	**Consistent.** The proposed project would comply with applicable CALGreen and Title 24 standards which includes the implementation of sustainable and energy efficient design features. Incorporation of such features would reduce overall GHG emissions released during operations.
Goal 8. Air Quality: A city with limited sources of air pollution.	
Policy 8.4. Electric vehicles: Encourage the use of electric vehicles (EV), including golf carts and Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEV), by encouraging developments to provide EV and NEV charging stations, street systems, and other infrastructure that support the use of EVs. Similarly, encourage the use of renewable energy sources to power EV plug-in stations.	**Consistent.** As discussed above, the project would comply with 2022 Title 24 and CALGreen Code. The CALGreen standards requires new single-family residential units to include the installation of a listed raceway to accommodate a dedicated 208/240-volt branch circuit for the future installation of an EV charger. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to install solar panels in accordance with CALGreen Code standards.
Policy 8.5. Construction-related emissions: Require construction activities, including on-site building and the transport of materials, to limit emissions and dust.	**Consistent**. Construction of the proposed project would comply with the SCAQMD Rule 402 and 403 which would reduce dust emissions during construction activities. Additionally, construction equipment would not be allowed to idle and would be required to be powered down when not in use, reducing overall emissions.
Source: City of Palm Desert, *General Plan*.	

Conclusion

In summary, the project's characteristics render it consistent with Statewide, regional, and local climate change mandates, plans, policies, and recommendations. More specifically, the GHG plan consistency analysis provided above demonstrates that the project complies with the regulations and GHG reduction goals, policies, actions, and strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan, 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and the City's General Plan. Consistency with

these plans would reduce the impact of the project's incremental contribution of GHG emissions. Accordingly, the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, regulation, or recommendation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

***Mitigation Measures*:** No mitigation measures are required.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Response 4.8(a) above. Impacts would be less than significant.

***Mitigation Measures*:** No mitigation measures are required.

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4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			✓	
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			✓	
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				✓
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				✓
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				✓
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?		✓		
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon the *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 620-170-009, Catavina Project, 38105 Portola Avenue, Palm Desert, Riverside County, California 92260,* prepared by GeoTek, Inc., dated August 12, 2024; refer to Appendix E, *Phase I ESA.*

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less Than Significant Impact. Exposure of the public or the environment to hazardous materials could occur through improper handling or use of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes particularly by untrained personnel, a transportation accident, environmentally unsound disposal methods, or fire, explosion, or other emergencies. The severity of potential effects varies with the activity conducted, the concentration and type of hazardous material or wastes present, and the proximity of sensitive receptors.

Construction

Project construction could expose construction workers and the public to temporary hazards related to the transport, use, and maintenance of construction materials (i.e., oil, diesel fuel, and transmission fluid), and/or import/export of soils. Project construction activities would be compliant with the applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials/waste, ensuring that potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner. Impacts concerning the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during project construction would be less than significant.

Operations

Hazardous materials are not typically associated with single-family residential uses. Anticipated hazardous materials use may include cleaning products and the use of pesticides and herbicides for landscape maintenance. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials would ensure that potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner and would minimize the potential for safety impacts to occur. As such, impacts concerning the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during project operations would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less Than Significant Impact. One of the means through which human exposure to hazardous substance could occur is through accidental release. Incidents that result in an accidental release of hazardous substance into the environment can cause contamination of soil, surface water, and groundwater, in addition to any toxic fumes that might be generated. If not cleaned up immediately and completely, the hazardous substances can migrate into the soil or enter a local stream or channel causing contamination of soil and water. Human exposure of contaminated soil, soil vapor, or water can have potential health effects on a variety of factors, including the nature of the contaminant and the degree of exposure.

Construction

During project construction, there is a possibility of accidental release of hazardous substances such as petroleum-based fuels or hydraulic fluids used for construction equipment. The level of risk associated with the accidental release of hazardous substances is not considered significant due to the small volume and low concentration of hazardous materials utilized during construction. As required by various State laws, the construction contractor is required to use standard construction controls and safety procedures that would avoid and minimize the potential for accidental release of such substances into the environment. Standard construction practices would be observed such that any materials released are appropriately contained and remediated as required by local, State, and Federal law.

Construction activities could also result in accidental conditions involving existing on-site contamination. However, based on the Phase I ESA, no evidence of Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) were identified in association with the project site. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Operations

Refer to Response 4.9(a) for a description of impacts related to project operations. Upon adherence to existing regulations related to hazards and hazardous materials safety, impacts pertaining to the potential for accidental conditions during project operations would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact. There are no schools located within one-quarter mile of the project site. The nearest schools to the project site are Desert Adventist Academy (74200 Country Club Drive), located approximately 0.5-mile southeast of the project site, and First School (73247 Hovley Lane West) located approximately one mile to the southwest. No impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to compile and update a regulatory sites list (pursuant to the criteria of the Section). The California Department of Health Services is also required to compile and update, as appropriate, a list of all public drinking water wells that contain detectable levels of organic contaminants and that are subject to water analysis pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 116395. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the local enforcement agency, as designated pursuant to Section 18051 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, to compile, as appropriate, a list of all solid waste disposal facilities from which there is a known migration of hazardous waste.

According to Appendix E, the project site is not listed pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. No impact would result in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The nearest airport to the project site is the Bermuda Dunes Airport (Crown Aero) located approximately 7.8 miles east of the project site. According to the *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*, the project site is not located within the Bermuda Dunes Airport influence area and airspace protection area.[26] Additionally, the project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or related facilities. Therefore, implementation would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport noise levels or safety hazards. No impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As indicated in Section 4.17, *Transportation*, the project does not propose changes to the City's circulation system, such as sharp curves or dangerous intersections, and would not introduce incompatible uses to area roadways. Access to the site would be provided via Portola Avenue The Riverside County Fire Department would review the proposed driveways and interior vehicular circulation network against the Department's requirements related to fire access and turning radius requirements. Further, should partial or full lane closures be required as part of project construction activities, implementation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would minimize congestion and ensure safe travel, including emergency access in the project vicinity; refer to **Mitigation Measure TRA-1**. As such, project implementation would not interfere with the implementation of an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure TRA-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to **Mitigation Measure TRA-1** in Section 4.17.

[26] Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission, *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*, *Chapter 7. Vol. I, Bermuda Dunes*, December 2004.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map Viewer, the project site is not located in a very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ), nor within a State Responsibility Area.[27]

In the event of a fire, adequate access and circulation for fire trucks would be provided through the proposed neighborhood. Entry and exit would be available from Portola Avenue and Frank Sinatra Drive, with access available to all through streets within the development. As a result, project implementation would not result in exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. A less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

[27] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, *FHSZ Viewer*, https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008, accessed January 29, 2025.

4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			✓	
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			✓	
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
1) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			✓	
2) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			✓	
3) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			✓	
4) Impede or redirect flood flows?			✓	
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				✓
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon the *Infiltration Evaluation Proposed Single-Family Residential Development Catavina Project Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 620-170-009 38105 Portola Avenue Palm Desert, Riverside County, California*, prepared by Blue Fern West, LLC, dated October 2, 2024; refer to Appendix F, *Infiltration Evaluation*.

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. As part of Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, the EPA established regulations under the NPDES program to control direct stormwater discharge. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) administers the General Construction Permit under the NPDES permitting program and is responsible for developing NPDES permitting requirements. The SWRCB works in coordination with the RWQCBs to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore water quality. The City lies within the Colorado River Basin RWQCB.

Construction

Typical construction activities would require the use of gasoline- and diesel-powered heavy equipment, such as backhoes, water pumps, bulldozers, and air compressors. Chemicals such as gasoline, diesel fuel, lubricating oil, hydraulic oil, lubricating grease, automatic transmission fluid, paints, solvents, glues, and other substances would also likely be used during construction. An accidental release of any of these substances could degrade surface water runoff quality and contribute additional sources of pollution to the existing drainage system. Therefore, small quantities of

pollutants have the potential to enter the storm drainage system during project construction and degrade water quality. In general, construction-related impacts to water quality could occur in the following periods of activity:

- During the earthwork and construction phase, when the potential for erosion, siltation, and sedimentation would be the greatest; and
- Following construction, before the establishment of ground cover, when the erosion potential may remain relatively high.

Because development of the project would disturb more than one acre of soil, construction activities would be required to obtain coverage under the NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities requirements (and all subsequent revisions and amendments). To demonstrate compliance with NPDES requirements, a Notice of Intent must be prepared and submitted to the SWRCB, providing notification and intent to comply with the Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit also requires that non-stormwater discharges from construction sites be eliminated or reduced to the maximum extent practicable, a stormwater pollution prevention program (SWPPP) that governs construction activities for the project be developed, and routine inspections be performed of all stormwater pollution prevention measures and control practices being used at the site, including inspections before and after storm events. Permittees must verify compliance with permit requirements by monitoring their effluent, maintaining records, and filing periodic reports.

The SWPPP would include a site map showing the construction site perimeter, proposed buildings, lots, roadways, stormwater collection and discharge points, general topography both before and after construction, and drainage patterns. The SWPPP would identify the BMPs that would be used to protect stormwater runoff and the placement of those BMPs. The SWPPP would also identify a visual monitoring program, a chemical monitoring program for "nonvisible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs. Upon completion of construction, a Notice of Termination would be submitted to the SWRCB to indicate that construction has been completed. Thus, compliance with NPDES requirements would reduce short-term construction-related impacts to water quality to a less than significant level.

Operations

The project would be in compliance with Municipal Code Chapter 24.20, *Stormwater Management and Discharge Control*, which establishes requirements for stormwater and non-stormwater quality discharge and control by prohibiting discharges of pollutants or waters containing pollutants that cause or contribute to a violation of applicable water quality standards. Further, the project proposes three retention basins totaling approximately 2.5 acres to manage stormwater runoff. Further, as the project would be served by the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), the project would be subject to the CVWD Landscape Ordinance 1302.5, which requires water reduction methods. These methods include the following requirements: weather-based irrigation controllers that automatically adjust watering; setbacks of spray emitters from impervious surfaces; the use of porous rock and gravel buffers between grass and curbs to eliminate run-off onto streets; and drip system irrigation methods. These reduction methods would reduce runoff at the project site. Additionally, the RWQCB requires the preparation of Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), which contains project-specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce impacts to water quality. Compliance with Municipal Code Chapter 24.20 and adherence to policies contained in the State General Construction Activity Stormwater Permit requirements and the project-specific WQMP would result in less than significant impacts to water quality.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less Than Significant Impact. As indicated in the Infiltration Evaluation, groundwater was not encountered at the project site. Thus, the project site is not used for groundwater recharge. CVWD would provide domestic water supply service to the project site. Pursuant to Senate Bill 610, a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) was prepared for the project

because more the 500 dwelling units are proposed; refer to Appendix I, *Water Supply Assessment*. According to the WSA, currently all CVWD's urban potable water uses are supplied using groundwater. The WSA determined that the total projected water demand for the project is 156.78 acre-feet per year. This represents approximately 0.1 percent of the total planned increases by 2045 based on the current conditions, as represented by the average urban water demand of 98,058 acre-feet per year from 2019 to 2023. Thus, implementation of the project would account for a nominal increase in the water demand. The WSA demonstrates that sufficient water supplies exist, or will exist based on current water planning assumptions, to meet the projected demands of the project, in addition to current and future projected water demands within CVWD's service area in normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years over a 20-year projection. Thus, the proposed project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

1) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river. The project site is generally flat and site drainage is generally directed to the south, as identified in the project's Infiltration Evaluation; refer to Appendix F. The site does not contain any rivers or streams. Project compliance with the General Construction Permit requirements and Municipal Code Chapter 24.20 would minimize erosion and water quality impacts during construction to less than significant levels; refer to Response 4.10(a).

Although the project would increase impervious surfaces compared to existing conditions, long-term operation of the project would not have the potential to result in substantial erosion or siltation given the nature of proposed use and the urbanized project setting. The project site would not include any large areas of exposed soils that would be subject to runoff. Rather, any unpaved areas would be landscaped to minimize the potential for erosion or siltation on or off site. The proposed project would include operational BMPs in conformance with the RWQCB's requirements to reduce long-term water quality impacts to less than significant levels; refer to Response 4.10(a). In addition, the proposed project would provide parkway improvements adjacent to the existing roadway along Frank Sinatra Drive, but the existing curb and gutter would not be modified. As such, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

2) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Less Than Significant Impact. Surface runoff currently flows southerly across the project site. Although implementation of the project would increase impervious surfaces, all flows onsite would be directed and captured into three retention basins distributed throughout the project site; refer to Exhibit 3, *Conceptual Site Plan*. Onsite retention basins would be designed to retain the stormwater from a 100-year, 24-hour storm event, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 27.12.056. Thus, on- or off-site flooding would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

3) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Response 4.10(c)(2), although the proposed project would involve an increase in impervious surfaces, the project's proposed retention basins would capture onsite surface flows. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to exceed the capacity of an existing or planned stormwater drainage system. Further, the project would be subject to compliance with a WQMP, which would contain project-specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce impacts to water quality. Therefore, project implementation is not anticipated to create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4) Impede or redirect flood flows?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Responses 4.10(c)(2) and 4.10(d).

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

No Impact.

Flood Hazard

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's *National Flood Hazard Layer*, the project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area.[28] No impact would occur in this regard.

Tsunami

A tsunami is a great sea wave, commonly referred to as a tidal wave, produced by a significant undersea disturbance such as tectonic displacement of a sea floor associated with large, shallow earthquakes. The project site is located over 70 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, a sufficient distance to not be subject to tsunami impacts. No impact would occur in this regard.

Seiche

A seiche is an oscillation of a body of water in an enclosed or semi-enclosed basin, such as a reservoir, harbor, lake, or storage tank. The project site is not in the vicinity of a reservoir, harbor, lake, or storage tank capable of creating a seiche. No impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requires local public agencies and groundwater sustainability agencies in high- and medium-priority basins to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans or prepare an alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan. The project site is located within Coachella Valley – Indio Subbasin, which is ranked as a "medium" priority basin.[29] Therefore, CVWD has prepared

[28] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search By Address*, https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=38105%20Portola%20Ave%20palm%20desert%20ca, accessed January 10, 2025.

[29] California Department of Water Resources, *SGMA Basin Prioritization Dashboard*, https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/final/, accessed January 10, 2025.

and implemented its Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Alternative Plan.[30] The SGMA Alternative Plan is intended to protect the vested interests of existing groundwater producers while providing a planning framework for new water supply projects for the benefit of groundwater producers and the public. The SGMA Alternative Plan goals include:

- Meet current and future water demands with a 10 percent supply buffer
- Avoid chronic groundwater overdraft
- Manage and protect water quality
- Collaborate with tribes and State and Federal agencies on shared objectives
- Manage future costs
- Minimize adverse environmental impacts
- Reduce vulnerability to climate change and drought impacts

As discussed, the project would be required to comply with NPDES and Municipal Code requirements regarding protection of water quality and thus would not conflict with the Management Plan. Further, the project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. As such, upon compliance with all applicable regulations, the proposed project is not anticipated to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SGMA Alternative Plan.

The project site is located within the Colorado River RWQCB. The Colorado River RWQCB manages surface waters through implementation of its *Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin* (Basin Plan). Basin Plan Chapter 4, *Water Quality Objectives*, includes specific water quality objectives according to waterbody type (i.e., ocean waters, enclosed bays and estuaries, inland surface waters, and groundwaters. Basin Plan Chapter 5, *Plans, Policies and Issues*, includes a number of water quality control plans and policies adopted by the SWRCB that apply to the Colorado River RWQCB. As concluded under Responses 4.10(a) and 4.10(b), the project would result in less than significant impacts to surface water quality and groundwater quality following conformance with applicable regulations. Less than significant impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[30] Indio Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, *2022 Indio Subbasin Water Management Plan Update Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Alternative Plan*, December 2021.

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4.11 Land Use and Planning

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Physically divide an established community?				✓
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			✓	

a) Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The factors that could physically divide a community are generally large, linear infrastructure projects including, but are not limited to construction of major highways or roadways; construction of storm channels; closing bridges or roadways; and construction of utility transmission lines.

The key factor with respect to this question is creating physical barriers that change the connectivity between areas of a community to the extent that persons are separated from other areas of the community. As indicated in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, the project site is currently vacant and is surrounded by residential development, golf courses, and undeveloped land associated with the former golf course. The project does not propose to construct any major infrastructure or utilities that could physically divide an established community within the project site or the immediate vicinity. No changes to the connectivity of the surrounding area are proposed that would separate persons from other areas of the community. Therefore, no impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site has a General Plan land use designation of Town Center Neighborhood, which allows single-family attached and detached development at a density between seven (7) and 22 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The site has a zoning designation of Planned Residential (P.R 22), which also allows single-family attached and detached development, with a maximum of 22 du/ac. The density of the project would be approximately 7.0 du/ac, which is within the allowable density range of 7 to 22 du/ac for the Town Center Neighborhood General Plan land use and Planned Residential zoning designations. As such, the proposed project is consistent with the existing land use and zoning designations.

Further, the project's design would be reviewed and approved by the City during the development review process. This process would verify that the project's design is compatible with development in the surrounding vicinity and that it is consistent with applicable zoning regulations. As such, the project would result in less than significant impacts in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

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4.12 Mineral Resources

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				✓
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				✓

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. According to the City's General Plan EIR, the City is classified as Mineral Resource Zone 3 (MRZ-3) under the California Mineral Land Classification System, which indicates mineral resources are present, but the significance of the resource is considered undetermined because no mining has historically occurred in the area. As such, no known mineral resource recovery sites are known to occur within or adjacent to the project site, and no sites are identified in the General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources. No impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. Refer to Response 4.12(a). The project site is not located in an area designated for locally-important mineral resources and is not utilized for mineral resource production. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. No impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

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4.13 Noise

Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			✓	
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			✓	
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon Appendix G, *Noise Modeling*.

Sound is mechanical energy transmitted by pressure waves in a compressible medium such as air and is characterized by both its amplitude and frequency (or pitch). The human ear does not hear all frequencies equally. In particular, the ear de-emphasizes low and very high frequencies. To better approximate the sensitivity of human hearing, the A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) has been developed. On this scale, the human range of hearing extends from approximately 3 dBA to around 140 dBA.

Noise is generally defined as unwanted or excessive sound, which can vary in intensity by over one million times within the range of human hearing; therefore, a logarithmic scale, known as the decibel scale (dB), is used to quantify sound intensity. Noise can be generated by a number of sources, including mobile sources such as automobiles, trucks, and airplanes, and stationary sources such as construction sites, machinery, and industrial operations. Noise generated by mobile sources typically attenuates (is reduced) at a rate between 3 dBA and 4.5 dBA per doubling of distance. The rate depends on the ground surface and the number or type of objects between the noise source and the receiver. Hard and flat surfaces, such as concrete or asphalt, have an attenuation rate of 3 dBA per doubling of distance. Soft surfaces, such as uneven or vegetated terrain, have an attenuation rate of about 4.5 dBA per doubling of distance. Noise generated by stationary sources typically attenuates at a rate between 6 dBA and about 7.5 dBA per doubling of distance.

There are several metrics used to characterize community noise exposure, which fluctuate constantly over time. One such metric, the equivalent sound level (L_{eq}), represents a constant sound that, over the specified period, has the same sound energy as the time-varying sound. Noise exposure over a longer period is often evaluated based on the Day-Night Sound Level (L_{dn}). This is a measure of 24-hour noise levels that incorporates a 10 dBA penalty for sounds occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. The penalty is intended to reflect the increased human sensitivity to noises occurring during nighttime hours, particularly at times when people are sleeping and there are lower ambient noise conditions. Typical L_{dn} noise levels for light and medium density residential areas range from 55 dBA to 65 dBA. Similarly, Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is a measure of 24-hour noise levels that incorporates a 5-dBA penalty for sounds occurring between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and a 10-dBA penalty for sounds occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. to account for noise sensitivity in the evening and nighttime, respectively.

Regulatory Framework

State

The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Noise Element Guidelines include recommended exterior and interior noise level standards for local jurisdictions to identify and prevent the creation of incompatible land uses due to noise. The OPR Noise Element Guidelines contain a land use compatibility table that describes the compatibility of various land uses with a range of environmental noise levels in terms of the CNEL. Table 4.13-1, *Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments*, presents guidelines for determining acceptable and unacceptable community noise exposure limits for various land use categories. The guidelines also present adjustment factors that may be used to arrive at noise acceptability standards that reflect the noise control goals of the community, the particular community's sensitivity to noise, and the community's assessment of the relative importance of noise pollution.

Table 4.13-1
Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure (L_{dn} or CNEL, dBA)			
	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Residential – Low Density, Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	50 – 60	55 – 70	70 – 75	75 – 85
Residential – Multiple Family	50 – 65	60 – 70	70 – 75	70 – 85
Transient Lodging – Motel, Hotels	50 – 65	60 – 70	70 – 80	80 – 85
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	50 – 70	60 – 70	70 – 80	80 – 85
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	NA	50 – 70	NA	65 – 85
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports	NA	50 – 75	NA	70 – 85
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	50 – 70	NA	67.5 – 75	72.5 – 85
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	50 – 70	NA	70 – 80	80 – 85
Office Buildings, Business Commercial, Professional	50 – 70	67.5 – 77.5	75 – 85	NA
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	50 – 75	70 – 80	75 – 85	NA

Notes: NA = Not Applicable; L_{dn} = Day/Night Average; CNEL = community noise equivalent level; dBA = A-weighted decibels
Normally Acceptable - Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.
Conditionally Acceptable - New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.
Normally Unacceptable - New Construction or development should be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.
Clearly Unacceptable – New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Source: State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, *General Plan Guidelines*, July 2017.

Local

City of Palm Desert General Plan

The Noise Element of the General Plan includes goals and policies related to noise and provides a comprehensive program for including noise control in the planning process. The Noise Element contains the following goals related to the project:

Goal 1: Land Use Planning and Design. A city where noise compatibility between differing types of land uses is ensured through the land use planning process and design strategies.

> **Policy 1.1: Noise Compatibility**. Apply the Noise Compatibility Matrix, shown in Figure 7.1 (Table 4.13-1), as a guide for planning and development decisions. The City will require projects involving new development or modifications to existing development to implement mitigation measures, where necessary, to reduce noise levels to at least the normally compatible range shown in the City's Noise Compatibility Matrix shown in Figure 7.1.

Mitigation measures should focus on architectural features and building design and construction, rather than site design features such as excessive setbacks, berms and sound walls, to maintain compatibility with adjacent and surrounding uses.

Goal 2: Stationary Sources of Noise. A city with minimal noise from stationary sources.

Policy 2.1: Noise Ordinance. Minimize noise conflicts between neighboring properties through enforcement of applicable regulations such as the City's Noise Control Ordinance.

Policy 2.2: Noise Control. Ensure that noise impacts from stationary sources on noise-sensitive receptors and noise emanating from construction activities, private developments/residences, landscaping activities, night clubs and bars, and special events are minimized.

Goal 3: Mobile Sources of Noise. A city with minimal noise from mobile sources.

Policy 3.1: Roadway Noise. Implement the policies listed under Goal 1 to reduce the impacts of roadway noise on noise-sensitive receptors where roadway noise exceeds the normally compatible range shown in the City's Noise Compatibility Matrix shown in Figure 7.1 (Table 4.13-1).

Palm Desert Municipal Code

The City's noise regulation is contained within the *Palm Desert Municipal Code* (Municipal Code). The following sections of the Municipal Code are applicable to the proposed project:

9.24.030 Sound Level Limits.

A. The following ten-minute average sound level limits (Table 4.13-2, *City of Palm Desert Sound Level Limits*), unless otherwise specifically indicated, shall apply as indicated in the following table as it relates to a fixed noise source or pool equipment pursuant to Section 25.16.110 or leaf blowers pursuant to Section 9.24.075.

Table 4.13-2
City of Palm Desert Sound Level Limits

Zone	Time	Applicable Ten-Minute Average Decibel Limit (A-Weighted)
Residential – All Zones	7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	55
Residential – All Zones	10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.	45
Public Institutional	7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	65
Public Institutional	10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.	55
Commercial	7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	65
Commercial	10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.	55
Manufacturing Industrial	7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	70
Agricultural	10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.	55
Source: City of Palm Desert Municipal Code.		

B. If the measured ambient noise level exceeds the applicable limit as noted in the table in subsection A of this section, the allowable average sound level shall be the ambient noise level.

C. The sound level limit between two zoning districts shall be measured at the higher allowable district.

9.24.070 Construction Activities.

No person shall perform, nor shall any person be employed nor shall any person cause any other person to be employed to work for which a building permit is required by the city in any work of construction, erection, demolition, alteration, repair, addition to or improvement of any building, structure, road or improvement to realty except between the hours as set forth as follows:

- October 1st through April 30th
  - Monday through Friday: 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
  - Saturday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - Sunday and Government Code Holidays: None

- May 1st through September 30th
  - Monday through Friday: 5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
  - Saturday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - Sunday and Government Code Holidays: None

Emergency work and/or unusual conditions may cause work to be permitted with the consent of the city manager upon recommendation of the building director or the city engineer.

9.24.100 Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Equipment.

The noise standards enumerated in Section 9.24.030 shall be increased by eight dBA when the alleged offensive noise source is an air conditioning or refrigeration system or associated equipment which was installed prior to the effective date of December 1, 1985. Installation of new equipment must be certified to be within the provisions of this chapter for night and day operation noise level.

Existing Conditions

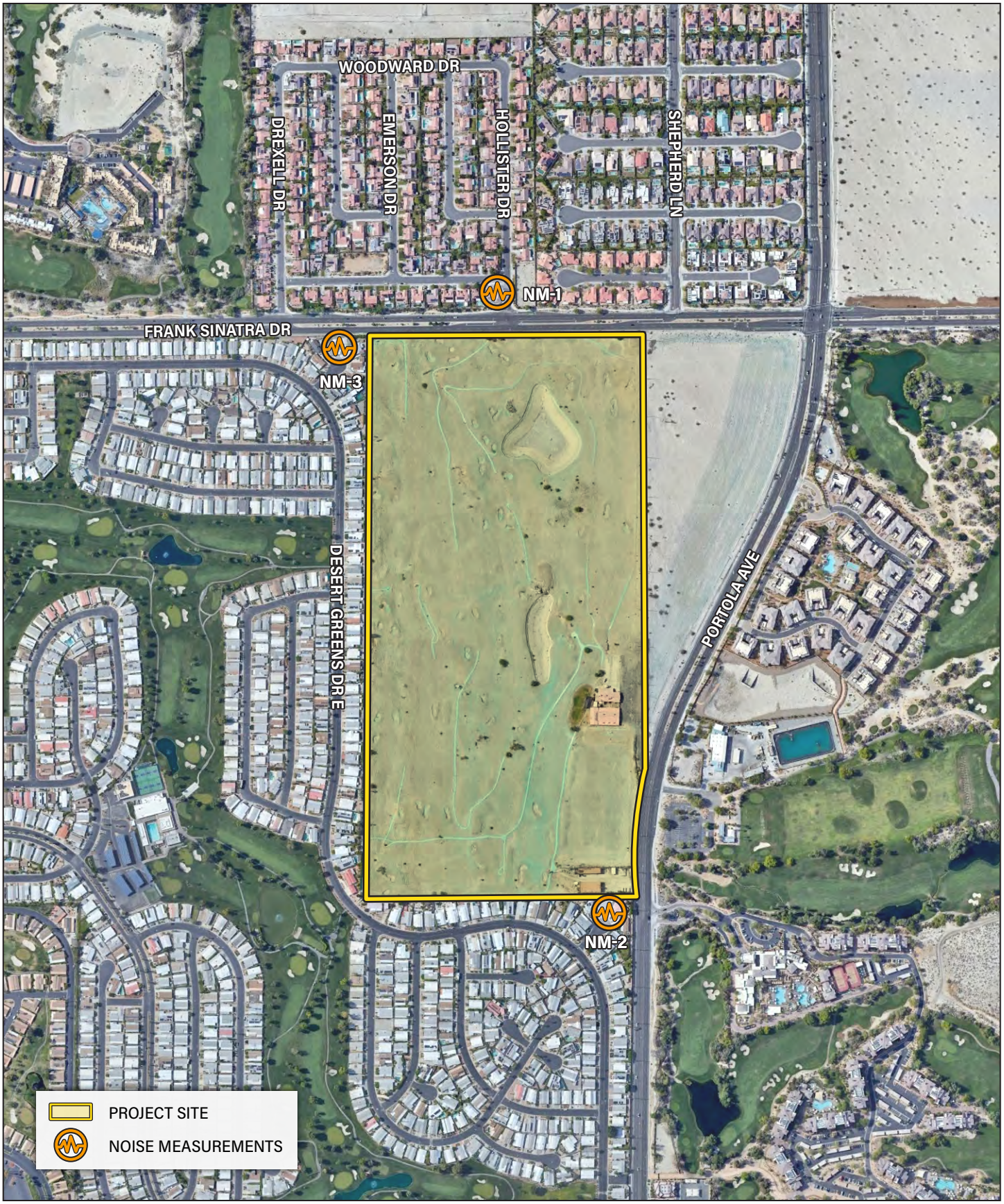
The project site is in an urban area. Noise sources in the project area include the use of mechanical equipment (e.g., heating, ventilation, and air conditioning [HVAC] units) and motor vehicle traffic along Frank Sinatra Drive and Portola Avenue. The noise associated with these sources may represent a single-event noise occurrence, short-term, or long-term/continuous noise.

Mobile Sources

Most of the existing mobile source noise in the project area is generated from vehicles traveling along Frank Sinatra Drive and Portola Avenue.

Noise Measurements

To quantify existing ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project site, two noise measurements were taken on January 30, 2025; refer to Exhibit 4.13-1, *Noise Measurement Locations* and Table 4.13-3, *Noise Measurements*. The noise measurement sites were representative of typical existing noise exposure within and immediately adjacent to the project site. Three ten-minute measurements were taken between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Short-term (L_{eq}) measurements are considered representative of the noise levels throughout the day.



Source: Google Earth Pro, February 2025

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL

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CATAVINA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Noise Measurement Locations

Exhibit 4.13-1

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Table 4.13-3
Noise Measurements

Site No.	Location	L_{eq} (dBA)	L_{min} (dBA)	L_{max} (dBA)	Time
1	Southwest corner of Hollister Drive and Frank Sinatra Drive	65.4	37.3	79.1	10:14 a.m.
2	In front of 39011 Cudy Circle	46.1	33.9	68.6	10:56 a.m.
3	In front of 38020 Cabin Circle	47.2	36.9	60.9	10:39 a.m.

Notes: dBA = A-weighted decibels, L_{eq} = Equivalent Sound Level; L_{min} = Minimum Sound Level; L_{max} = Maximum Sound Level, Peak = Highest Instantaneous Sound Level

Source: Michael Baker International, January 30, 2025.

Meteorological conditions were sunny, cool temperatures, with light wind speeds (0 to 4 miles per hour). Noise monitoring equipment used for the ambient noise survey consisted of a Brüel & Kjær Hand-held Analyzer Type 2250 equipped with a Type 4189 pre-polarized microphone. The monitoring equipment complies with applicable requirements of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for sound level meters. As shown in Table 4.13-3, the ambient recorded noise level in the project vicinity ranged between 46.1 dBA and 65.4 dBA. The results of the field measurements are included in Appendix G, *Noise Modeling*.

Noise Sensitive Receptors

Noise-sensitive land uses are generally considered to include those uses where noise exposure could result in health-related risks to individuals, as well as places where quiet is an essential element of their intended purpose. Residential dwellings are of primary concern because of the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to both interior and exterior noise levels. Additional land uses such as parks, historic sites, cemeteries, and recreation areas are considered sensitive to increases in exterior noise levels. Schools, churches, hotels, libraries, and other places where low interior noise levels are essential are also considered noise-sensitive land uses. The closest sensitive receptors to the project site are single-family residences adjacent to the south and west of the project site.

Thresholds of Significance

Construction Noise Standards

The City of Palm Desert does not have a quantitative threshold that applies to noise levels at active construction sites. To evaluate whether the proposed project would generate potentially significant temporary construction noise levels at off-site sensitive receiver locations, a construction-related noise level threshold was utilized from the Occupational Noise Exposure prepared by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). As a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, NIOSH identifies a noise level threshold based on the duration of exposure to the source. The construction-related noise level threshold starts at 85 dBA for more than eight hours per day, and for every 3-dBA increase, the exposure time is cut in half. For the purposes of this analysis, the lowest, most conservative construction noise level threshold of 85 dBA L_{eq} was used as an acceptable threshold for construction noise at the nearby sensitive receiver locations. Since this construction-related noise level threshold represents the energy average of the noise source over a given time, they are expressed as L_{eq} noise levels. Therefore, the noise level threshold of 85 dBA L_{eq} over a period of eight hours or more is used to evaluate the potential project-related construction noise level impacts at the nearby sensitive receiver locations. Noise levels from construction equipment and activities were modeled using the Federal Highway Administration's Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM).

Construction and Operational Vibration Standards

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Transportation and Construction Vibration Manual identifies various vibration damage criteria for different building classes. The nearest sensitive receptor buildings are single-family residential buildings. Therefore, the architectural damage criterion for continuous vibrations at residential structures of 0.5 inch-per-second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV) is applied in the analysis.

Stationary Noise Sources

The City of Palm Desert Municipal Code Noise Ordinance was designed to control excessive noise from sources within the City. As such, the City of Palm Desert's residential noise level standards would be applied when analyzing noise impacts for residential uses. A project would result in a significant impact if project-related operational (stationary-source) noise levels exceed the daytime 55 dBA L_{eq} and/or nighttime 45 dBA L_{eq} noise level standard at nearby sensitive receiver locations; refer to Table 4.13-2 above.

Mobile Noise Sources

The primary source of noise associated with the operation of the proposed project would be from vehicular trips. An off-site traffic noise impact typically occurs when there is a discernable increase in traffic and the resulting noise level exceeds an established noise standard. In community noise considerations, changes in noise levels greater than 3.0 dB are often identified as discernible, while changes less than 1.0 dB would not be discernible to residents. A 5-dB change is generally recognized as a clearly discernable difference. Thus, the project would result in a significant noise impact if a permanent increase in ambient traffic noise levels of 3.0 dB occurs upon project implementation and the resulting noise level at the receiving sensitive receptor exceeds the applicable exterior standard at a noise sensitive use.

Impact Analysis

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less Than Significant Impact. It is difficult to specify noise levels that are generally acceptable to everyone; noise that is considered a nuisance to one person may be unnoticed by another. Standards may be based on documented complaints in response to documented noise levels or based on studies of the ability of people to sleep, talk, or work under various noise conditions.

Construction

Construction activities generally are temporary and have a short duration, resulting in periodic increases in the ambient noise environment. Ground-borne noise and other types of construction-related noise impacts typically occur during the initial phase (grading), which has the potential to create the highest levels of noise. Construction of the project would be performed in five phases. The construction activities associated with the project would include demolition, grading, and paving during Phase 1, and grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating applications during Phase 2 through Phase 5. Construction activities during Phase 2 through Phase 5 would overlap. Construction equipment produces maximum noise levels when equipment is operating under full power conditions (i.e., the equipment engine at maximum speed). However, equipment used on construction sites typically operates under less than full power conditions, or partial power. To characterize construction-period noise levels more accurately, the average (L_{eq}) noise level associated with each construction stage is calculated based on the quantity, type, and usage factors for each type of equipment that would be used during each construction stage. These noise levels are typically associated with multiple pieces of equipment simultaneously operating on partial power load.

The estimated construction noise levels at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors are presented in Table 4.13-4, *Noise Levels Generated during Construction Activities*. Noise levels from construction equipment and activities were modeled using the Federal Highway Administration's Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM). The construction equipment list is based on the California Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2022.1; refer Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Modeling Results*. To present a conservative impact analysis, the estimated noise levels were calculated for a scenario in which all heavy construction equipment were assumed to operate simultaneously.

The nearest sensitive uses (single-family residences) are adjacent to the west and south the proposed project site. However, construction activities would occur throughout the project site, and it should also be noted that construction noise levels would intermittently occur for a few days when construction equipment is operating closest to the nearest sensitive uses. The remainder of the time, the construction noise levels would be much lower because the equipment would be working in an area farther away from the existing sensitive uses. The General Noise Assessment methodology prescribed in the FTA *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, recommends evaluating construction noise from the center of the site, stating under the variable distance in its construction noise calculation to "assume that all equipment operates at the center of the project." As such, the construction noise levels shown in Table 4.13-4 are estimated using the distance from the center of the project site to the property line of the nearest existing sensitive receptors, which is approximately 650 feet from the closest sensitive receptors to the west.[31]

Table 4.13-4
Noise Levels Generated during Construction Activities

Construction Activity	Estimated Exterior Construction Noise Level at 650 feet (Center of Project Site) (dBA L_{eq})[1]
Individual Activity[2]	
Demolition	64.2
Grading	64.8
Building Construction	60.1
Paving	59.3
Architectural Coating	51.4
Overlapping Activities[3]	
Demolition and Grading	67.5
Building Construction and Grading	66.1
Building Construction and Paving	62.7
Building Construction and Architectural Coating	60.6

Notes:
1. These noise levels conservatively assume the simultaneous operation of all heavy construction equipment at the same precise location. Refer to Appendix G for modeled construction equipment.
2. The same set of construction equipment would be used during all construction phases (Phase 1 through Phase 5), and therefore the same level of construction noise would be generated.
3. Construction activities would overlap within and between phases; refer to Appendix A for detailed construction schedule.

Source: Federal Highway Administration, *Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM)*, 2006.

As shown in Table 4.13-4, construction-generated noise levels would range from approximately 51.4 to 64.8 dBA L_{eq} during individual construction activities and 60.6 to 67.5 dBA L_{eq} during overlapping construction activities at the nearest residential uses to the west. As such, construction noise would not have the potential to exceed the NIOSH significance of threshold of 85 dBA L_{eq}. Further, construction activities are exempt from the City's noise thresholds as it is a normal part of urban life and the project would be required to comply with the City's allowable construction hours (Municipal Code Section 9.24.070). Municipal Code Section 9.24.070 permits construction activities between 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturday from October 1st to April 30th; and between 5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturday from May 1st to September 30th. Construction activities are not allowed on Sundays or government code holidays unless approval is obtained from the city manager upon recommendation of the building director or the city engineer. As such, a less than significant noise impact would occur in this regard.

Operations

Mobile Noise

Future development generated by the proposed project would result in additional traffic on adjacent roadways, thereby increasing vehicular noise in the vicinity of existing and proposed land uses. As determined by the California

[31] Although western and southern residences are all adjacent to the project site, the center of the project site is located closer to the western residences as the project site is shorter in the west-east direction than the north-south direction.

Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the *Technical Noise Supplement to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol* (September 2013), a doubling in roadway traffic volumes is required to generate any noticeable increase in roadway noise levels.[32] According to the *Scoping Agreement for Traffic Impact Study* prepared by Michael Baker International for the project, the project would generate approximately 4,810 average daily trips (ADT). The nearest roadway segment of the project vicinity currently experiences approximately 10,512 ADT along Portola Avenue (North of Country Club Drive) and approximately 10,884 ADT along Frank Sinatra Drive (East of Portola Avenue).[33] As such, the project's trip generation (approximately 4,810 ADT) would not double existing traffic volumes along nearby roadways and an increase in traffic noise along local roadways would be imperceptible. Project-related traffic noise impacts would be less than significant.

Stationary Noise Impacts

Stationary noise sources associated with the proposed project would include mechanical equipment and outdoor gathering area. These noise sources are typically intermittent and short in duration. Noise has a decay rate due to distance attenuation, which is calculated based on the Inverse Square Law. Based upon the Inverse Square Law, sound levels decrease by 6 dBA for each doubling of distance from the source.[34] All stationary noise activities would be required to comply with the City's Noise Ordinance and the California Building Code requirements pertaining to noise attenuation.

Mechanical Equipment

Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) units typically generate noise levels of approximately 66 dBA L_{eq} at 3 feet from the source.[35] HVAC units would be included on the side or roof of the proposed single-family residential buildings on the ground. The closest sensitive receptors are single-family residential uses adjacent to the west and south of the project site, approximately 10 feet when measured from the boundary of the existing residence parcels to the boundary of the proposed single-family residence parcels. The proposed single-family residential buildings would have a 10-foot setback from the parcel boundary. As such, potential HVAC units on the parcels would be located as close as 20 feet from the nearest sensitive receptors to the west and south. At this distance, potential noise from HVAC units would be approximately 50 dBA. In addition, there is an existing wall along the western and southern project site boundaries blocking the line-of-sight between the nearest sensitive receptors and the proposed on-site HVAC units, which would reduce noise level by approximately 8 dBA.[36] As such, noise levels from the HVAC units would be reduced to 42 dBA at the nearest sensitive receptors, which would not exceed the City's noise standards for residential uses (i.e., 55 dBA for daytime and 45 dBA for nighttime) and would be lower than existing ambient noise levels near the site; refer to Table 4.13-3. Therefore, the nearest sensitive receptors would not be directly exposed to substantial noise from on-site mechanical equipment and impacts would be less than significant.

Outdoor Gathering Area

The proposed project includes a recreation area and open spaces throughout the project site. The outdoor area has the potential to be accessed by groups of people intermittently for gathering, etc. Noise generated by groups of people (i.e., crowds) is dependent on several factors including vocal effort, impulsiveness, and the random orientation of the crowd members. Crowd noise is estimated at 60 dBA at one meter (3.28 feet) away for raised normal speaking.[37] This noise level would have a +5 dBA adjustment for the impulsiveness of the noise source, and a -3 dBA adjustment for

[32] California Department of Transportation, Technical Noise Supplement to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol, September 2013.
[33] Coachella Valley Association of Governments, *Coachella Valley Traffic Counts*, https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=fb9489b188e74be3b599afb52741849d, accessed January 23, 2025.
[34] Cyril M. Harris, *Noise Control in Buildings*, 1994.
[35] Berger, Elliott H., et al., *Noise Navigator Sound Level Database with Over 1700 Measurement Values*, June 26, 2015.
[36] Federal Highway Administration, *Roadway Construction Noise Model User's Guide, January 2006*, https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/construction_noise/rcnm/rcnm.pdf, accessed January 16, 2025.
[37] M.J. Hayne, et al, *Prediction of Crowd Noise*, Acoustics, November 2006.

the random orientation of the crowd members.[38] Therefore, crowd noise would be approximately 62 dBA at one meter from the source (i.e., the outdoor gathering areas).

The nearest sensitive receptors would be the residential uses to the south of the project site, located approximately 180 feet from the closest open space on the south of the project site. Therefore, crowd noise at the nearest sensitive receptor would be 27 dBA, which would not exceed the City's noise standards for residential uses (i.e., 55 dBA for daytime and 45 dBA for nighttime) and would be lower than existing ambient noise levels near the site; refer to Table 4.13-3. As such, project noise associated with outdoor gathering area would not introduce an intrusive noise source over the existing condition.

According to the Supreme Court of California ruling in the *Make UC a Good Neighbor v. the Regents of the University of California*, it was determined that "social noise" (noise created by humans) was not an environmental impact required by CEQA to be analyzed for residential projects. Assembly Bill 1307 was signed into law in September 2023. Assembly Bill 1307 added Public Resources Code Section 21085 which states "For the purposes of this division, for residential projects, the effects of noise generated by the project occupants and their guest on human beings is not a significant effect on the environment". As such, the analysis shown above was only included for informational purposes. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact. Project construction can generate varying degrees of groundborne vibration, depending on the construction procedure and the construction equipment used. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in amplitude with distance from the source. The effect on buildings located in the vicinity of the construction site often varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and construction characteristics of the receiver building(s). The results from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible vibration at moderate levels, to slight damage at the highest levels. Groundborne vibrations from construction activities rarely reach levels that damage structures.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) *Transportation and Construction Vibration Manual* identifies various vibration damage criteria for different building classes. For most residential structures, the Caltrans architectural damage criterion for continuous vibrations is 0.5 in/sec PPV. The nearest sensitive receptor buildings are single-family residential buildings located as close as approximately 12 feet to the west and south of project site, when measured from existing residential building façade to the project site boundary. Therefore, construction equipment would operate as close as approximately 12 feet from the nearest sensitive receptor buildings. Typical vibration produced by construction equipment is illustrated in Table 4.13-6, *Typical Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment*.

[38] Ibid.

Table 4.13-6
Typical Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Approximate peak particle velocity at 25 feet (inch/sec)	Approximate peak particle velocity at 12 feet (inch/sec)[1]
Large bulldozer	0.089	0.1995
Loaded trucks	0.076	0.1704
Jackhammer	0.035	0.0785
Small bulldozer	0.003	0.0067

Notes:
1. Calculated using the following formula:

$PPV_{equip} = PPV_{ref} \times (25/D)^{1.1}$

where: PPV_{equip} = the peak particle velocity in in/sec of the equipment adjusted for the distance
PPV_{ref} = the reference vibration level in in/sec from Table 7-4 of the FTA *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Guidelines*
D = the distance from the equipment to the receiver

Source: Federal Transit Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, Table 7-4 Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment, September 2018.

As stated above, the nearest structures are the single-family residential structures located approximately 12 feet to the west and south of the construction activities. As indicated in Table 4.13-6, vibration velocities from typical heavy construction equipment used during project construction would range from 0.0067 to 0.1995 in/sec PPV at 12 feet from the source of activity, which would not exceed the FTA's 0.5 in/sec PPV threshold. Additionally, the project would not utilize heavy-duty construction equipment with noticeable vibration levels (e.g., vibratory rollers, pile drivers, etc.). Therefore, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact. The nearest airport to the project site is the Bermuda Dunes Airport located approximately 5.3 miles to the southeast. The project site is not located within two miles of the airport and is not located within the Bermuda Dunes Airport noise contours.[39] Additionally, the project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or related facilities. Therefore, project implementation would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels associated with aircraft. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[39] County of Riverside, *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Bermuda Dunes Airport*, December 2004, https://rcaluc.org/sites/g/files/aldnop421/files/migrated/Portals-13-PDFGeneral-plan-newplan-07--20Vol.-201-20Bermuda-20Dunes.pdf, accessed January 2025.

4.14 Population and Housing

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			✓	
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				✓

a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Less Than Significant Impact. A project could induce population growth in an area either directly, through the development of new residences or businesses, or indirectly, through the extension of roads or other infrastructure. The project would construct 546 single- and two-story residences, which would be permitted under the P.R 22 zoning designation for the project site.

The proposed project is not anticipated to induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly. Based on the City's average household size of 2.0, the project would introduce up to 1,092 new residents.[40] As a residential housing development, the project would not generate new permanent jobs. Thus, the project would not result in indirect population growth from potential employees relocating to the City. Therefore, potential population growth associated with the project would represent only a 2.15 percent increase over the City's estimated 2024 population of 50,889 persons.[41] As such, although nominal, the project would induce population growth in a local context.

Potential population growth impacts are also assessed based on a project's consistency with adopted plans that have addressed growth management from a local and regional standpoint. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) growth forecasts estimate the City's population to reach 64,100 persons by 2045, representing a total increase of 13,700 persons between 2016 and 2045.[42] SCAG's regional growth projections are based upon long-range development assumptions (i.e., General Plans) of the relevant jurisdiction. The project's anticipated resident population (1,092 persons) would represent 1.7 percent of the 2045 population anticipated for the City.

Although the project would result in direct population growth, the proposed project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth exceeding existing local conditions (2.15 percent increase) and/or regional populations projections (1.7 percent of the total projected 2045 population of the City). Additionally, buildout of the project site under the P.R 22 zoning was already contemplated in the General Plan and regional growth forecasts. As a result, the project would result in less than significant impacts to unplanned population growth.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[40] California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit, *Report E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, January 2032-2024 with 2020 Benchmark*, Sacramento, California, January 2024.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Southern California Association of Governments, *Current Context: Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Report*, September 3, 2020.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The project site is currently vacant. There are no existing residences on site. As such, project implementation would not displace existing people or housing. No impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.15 Public Services

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
1) Fire protection?			✓	
2) Police protection?			✓	
3) Schools?			✓	
4) Parks?			✓	
5) Other public facilities?			✓	

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

1) Fire protection?

Less Than Significant Impact. The City contracts fire protection services with the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). The nearest fire station to the project site is RCFD Station 71, located at 73995 Country Club Drive, approximately 1.6 miles south of the project site.

Construction

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would create a temporarily increased demand for fire protection services at the project site. All construction activities would be subject to compliance with all applicable State and local regulations in place to reduce risk of construction-related fire, such as installation of temporary construction fencing to restrict site access and maintenance of a clean construction site. As a result, project construction would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, and would not adversely impact service ratios, response times, or other RCFD performance standards. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Operation

The proposed project would create an increased demand for fire protection services with the addition of new residents to the area. However, the project would not induce significant population growth, and this increase would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities; refer to Section 4.14, *Population and Housing*. The proposed project would be required to comply with RCFD requirements for emergency access, fire flow, fire protection standards, fire lanes, and other site design/building standards. RCFD adheres to the requirements of the 2022 California Fire Code (CFC), which contains design/building standards such as sprinkler requirements, the use of fire-resistant materials where applicable, and guidelines for the storage of combustible materials. The proposed project would be required to comply with RCFD requirements for emergency access, turn radii, fire flow, fire protection standards, fire lanes, and other site design/building standards. Fire hydrant quantity and spacing needs would be determined

utilizing CFC guidelines relative to fire flow. The required fire flow is dependent upon the size of the structure, type of construction, and whether the building is equipped with fire sprinklers. The project would be subject to Municipal Code Chapter 15.26, *Fire Code*, which adopts by reference the 2022 edition of the California Fire Code. The California Fire Code includes site access requirements and fire safety precautions. The City would also collect a one-time Special Tax in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 16.01, which is imposed on all new development to help pay its fair share of costs in upgrading County fire facilities, as needed. Payment of this tax would help fund the acquisition, design, and construction of new fire facilities and would minimize the project's operational impacts to fire protection services to the greatest extent practicable. Collection of taxes and compliance with all RCFD and Municipal Code provisions would ensure operational impacts concerning fire protection services are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

2) Police protection?

Less Than Significant Impact. Police protection services for the City of Palm Desert are contracted through Riverside County Sheriff's Department (RCSD). The nearest police station to the project site is the Riverside County Sheriff Station, located at 73-705 Gerald Ford Drive, approximately 0.87-mile north of the project site.

Construction

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would create a temporarily increased demand for sheriff protection services at the project site. However, all construction activities would be subject to compliance with Municipal Chapter 15.04, *Building Code*. Specifically, Municipal Code 15.04.010 adopts by reference the California Building Code (CBC). Chapter 33, *Fire Safety During Construction and Demolition*, of the CBC includes emergency access requirements which would minimize site safety hazards and potential construction-related impacts to police services. As a result, project construction would not result in the need for new or physically altered sheriff protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, and would not adversely impact service ratios, response times, or other RCSD performance standards. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Operations

Project operations would increase demands for sheriff protection services above existing conditions. However, this increase would not require the construction of any new or physically altered RCSD facilities. Project implementation would be subject to compliance with applicable local regulations to reduce impacts to police protection services, such as Municipal Code Chapter 15.04. Specifically, Municipal Code Chapter 15.04.010 adopts by reference the CBC, which includes emergency access requirements which would minimize site safety hazards and potential operational impacts to police services. In addition, the City would collect a one-time development impact fee in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 16.01, which is imposed on all new development to help pay its fair share of costs in upgrading RCSD facilities, as needed. Payment of these fees would help fund the acquisition, design, and construction of new RCSD facilities and would minimize the project's operational impacts to police protection services to the greatest extent practicable. Collection of development impact fees and compliance with all Municipal Code provisions would ensure operational impacts concerning sheriff protection services are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

3) Schools?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is located within the boundaries of the Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD), which serves grades K-12 in the communities of Bermuda Dunes, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, and Palm Desert. The nearest DSUSD public school to the project site is James Earl Carter Elementary School (74251 Hovley Lane E), located approximately 1.3 miles southeast of the project site. Two private school facilities are located near the project area. The nearest schools to the project site are Desert Adventist Academy (74200 Country Club

Drive), located approximately 0.5-mile southeast of the project site, and First School (73247 Hovley Lane West) located approximately one mile to the southwest.

As indicated in Section 4.14, the project includes the development of 546 single- and two-story residences, which could generate additional students within the project area. Based on student generation rates included in the DSUSD Fee Justification Report[43], the proposed project would introduce approximately 191 new students to DSUSD. Although the project would result in an increased demand for DSUSD services, the project would be required to comply with Senate Bill (SB) 50 requirements, which allow school districts to collect impact fees from developers of new residential projects. According to Section 65996 of the California Government Code, payment of statutory fees is considered full mitigation for new development projects. Thus, upon payment of required fees by the project applicant consistent with existing State requirements, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4) Parks?

Less Than Significant Impact. The City Parks and Recreation Department currently operates and maintains 12 parks within the City.[43] The closest park to the project site is the University Park East, located approximately one mile northeast of the project site. The project is not anticipated to result in substantial unplanned population growth in the City; refer to Section 4.14. Further, the project proposes 15.4 acres of open space facilities, including recreation area and walking path along the eastern project boundary. Impacts associated with development of onsite open space and recreation facilities are analyzed throughout Section 4.1 through Section 4.20 of this document. The addition of these facilities would minimize the project's operational impacts to the City's existing parks and recreation facilities to the greatest extent practicable. Additionally, based on the City's authority under the Quimby Act, which is within the Subdivision Map Act, the City is authorized to require the dedication of land or to impose fees for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative or parcel subdivision map, if specified requirements are met. The act provides that the dedication of land, or the payment of fees, or both, shall not exceed the proportionate amount necessary to provide 3 acres of park area per 1,000 persons residing within a subdivision subject to the act, except as specified. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

5) Other public facilities?

Less Than Significant Impact. Other public facilities that could potentially be impacted by the proposed project include library services. The nearest library to the project site, the Palm Desert Library, is operated by the City of Palm Desert. It is located at 73300 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, CA 92260, located 2.5 miles southwest of the project site. The project's nominal population increase is not anticipated to result in a significant impact on library services. Further, as discussed in the General Plan EIR, development pursuant to the General Plan update would generate minimal additional demand on existing library services and would likely not require the provision of additional library space to meet recommended standards. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[43] Desert Sands Unified School District, *Fee Justification Report for New Residential and Commercial/Industrial Development,* May 18, 2022.

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4.16 Recreation

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			✓	
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			✓	

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Response 4.15(a)(4).

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Response 4.15(a)(4).

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

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4.17 Transportation

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?			✓	
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?			✓	
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?		✓		
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?		✓		

This section is primarily based upon the following technical reports:

- *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential,* prepared by Michael Baker International, dated September 4, 2025, and;
- *Catavina Residential – VMT Screening Assessment,* prepared by Michael Baker International, dated February 28, 2025.

Refer to Appendix H1, *Transportation Impact Analysis*, and Appendix H2, *VMT Assessment*.

a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Less Than Significant Impact. This section discusses the project's potential impacts to the circulation system, including transit system, bicycle system, and pedestrian facilities.

On September 27, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill (SB) 743 into law, which initiated a process to change transportation impact analyses completed in support of CEQA documentation. SB 743 eliminates level of service (LOS) as a basis for determining significant transportation impacts under CEQA and provides a new performance metric, vehicle miles traveled (VMT). A VMT-based analysis is thus provided below, in Response 4.17(b). As required by the City of Palm Desert, this transportation impact analysis has been prepared in accordance with the *Palm Desert Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines*, dated February 15, 2023 (City Guidelines). Michael Baker reviewed the study area, trip generation estimates, trip distribution, and other assumptions with City staff per the City's *TIA Scoping Agreement* (Attachment A in Appendix H1). Thus, the following analysis evaluates the project's potential to conflict with adopted LOS performance standards near the project site. The following analysis scenarios from the project's TIA are evaluated in this section:

- Existing Conditions
- Existing Plus Project Conditions
- Opening Year 2027 Without Project Conditions
- Opening Year 2027 With Project Conditions

Study Area

The following study intersections were examined as part of the TIA:

1. Cook Street & I-10 WB On Ramp (Signalized)
2. Cook Street & I-10 EB On Ramp (Signalized)
3. Cook Street & Gerald Ford Drive (Signalized)
4. Frank Sinatra Drive & Hollister Drive (Two-Way Stop Control)
5. Frank Sinatra Drive & Portola Avenue (Signalized)
6. Frank Sinatra Drive & Cook Street (Signalized)
7. Portola Avenue & Desert Hollow Court (Two-Way Stop Control)
8. Portola Avenue & Country Club Drive (Signalized)

The following study roadway segments were examined as part of the TIA:

1. Cook Street between I-10 EB Ramps and Gerald Ford Drive
2. Cook Street between Gerald Ford Drive and Frank Sinatra Drive
3. Frank Sinatra Drive between Hollister Drive and Portola Avenue
4. Frank Sinatra Drive between Portola Avenue and Cook Street
5. Portola Avenue between Frank Sinatra Drive and Desert Willow Court
6. Portola Avenue between Desert Willow Court and Country Club Drive

These eight (8) intersections and six (6) roadway segments have been identified in coordination with City staff as locations where traffic operations could potentially be impacted by the proposed project.

LOS Methodology

Level of Service (LOS) is commonly used as a qualitative description of intersection operation and is based on traffic control and experienced delay at the intersection. The intersection analysis conforms to the operational analysis methodology outlined the *Highway Capacity Manual (HCM 6th Edition)* and performed utilizing *Synchro 11* traffic analysis software.

The *HCM* analysis methodology describes the operation of an intersection using a range of level of service from LOS A (free-flow conditions) to LOS F (severely congested conditions), based on the corresponding stopped delay experienced per vehicle for study intersections as shown in Table 4.17-1, *HCM Intersection Level of Service Criteria*.

For signalized intersections, signal timing data and parameters such as cycle lengths, splits, clearance intervals, etc. were obtained from the current signal timing data sheets provided by City staff and incorporated into the Synchro model. Synchro reports average vehicle delay for a signalized intersection, which correspond to a particular LOS, to describe the overall operation of an intersection.

Unsignalized intersection LOS for all-way stops and roundabouts is based on the average vehicle delay for all approaches. Average vehicle delay for one-way or two-way stop-controlled intersections is influenced by available gaps in traffic flow on the non-controlled approaches and LOS is based on the approach with the worst delay.

Table 4.17-1
HCM Intersection Level of Service Criteria

Level of Service	Control Delay (seconds/vehicle) Signalized Intersections	Control Delay (seconds/vehicle) Unsignalized Intersections	Description
A	≤ 10	≤ 10	Operates with very low delay and most vehicles do not stop.
B	> 10 to 20	> 10 to 15	Operates with good progression with some restricted movements.
C	> 20 to 35	> 15 to 25	Operates with significant number of vehicles stopping with some backup and light congestion.
D	> 35 to 55	> 25 to 35	Operates with noticeable congestion, longer delays occur, and many vehicles stop.
E	> 55 to 80	> 35 to 50	Operates with significant delay, extensive queuing and unfavorable progression.
F	> 80	> 50	Operates at a level that is unacceptable to most drivers. Arrival rates exceed capacity of the intersection. Extensive queuing occurs.

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.

Performance Criteria

City of Palm Desert Facilities

The City of Palm Desert has identified LOS "D" as the threshold for acceptable operating conditions for intersections and roadway segments.

For purposes of this analysis, improvements or fair share contributions are required if a project does not meet the following LOS standards:

1. If the pre-project condition at an intersection or roadway segment is at or better than the minimum acceptable LOS (LOS D, or LOS E and the addition of project trips results in an unacceptable LOS (E or F).

2. If the pre-project condition is LOS E or F and the project adds 50 or more peak hour trips to the intersection or roadway segment. This type of impact would be considered a "cumulative" project impact in which the project would be required to contribute a fair share payment toward reducing the impact.

Existing Conditions

Existing Intersections Level of Service

Table 4.17-2, *Existing Intersection Analysis Results*, presents existing intersection LOS conditions during a typical weekday. As shown, all intersections are presently operating at a satisfactory LOS (D or better) during the weekday AM and PM peak hour.

Table 4.17-2
Existing Intersection Analysis Results

ID	Intersection	Control Type[2]	Existing Year			
			AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]
1	Cook Street & I-10 WB On Ramp	Signal	C	22.0	A	2.2
2	Cook Street & I-10 EB On Ramp	Signal	D	40.7	C	33.4
3	Cook Street & Gerald Ford Drive	Signal	C	30.2	C	34.5
4	Frank Sinatra Drive & Hollister Drive	TWSC	B	14.9	C	15.7
5	Frank Sinatra Drive & Portola Avenue	Signal	C	34.5	C	37.9
6	Frank Sinatra Drive & Cook Street	Signal	B	19.0	C	25.0
7	Portola Avenue & Desert Willow Court	TWSC	C	15.2	C	19.4
8	Portola Avenue & Country Club Drive	Signal	D	42.1	D	39.5

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.
Notes:
1. Delay is expressed in seconds per vehicle.
2. TWSC = Two-Way Stop-Controlled; AWSC = All-Way Stop-Controlled

Existing Roadway Segment Level of Service

Table 4.17-3, *Existing Roadway Segment Analysis Results*, presents existing segment LOS conditions during a typical weekday. Per the City's LOS Guidelines capacity values, all six study roadway segments currently operate under LOS C capacity.

Table 4.17-3
Existing Roadway Segment Analysis Results

Roadway	Segment	Roadway Classification	LOS C Capacity	ADT	V/C	LOS
Cook Street	I-10 EB Ramps to Gerald Ford Drive	Vehicular Oriented Arterials	45,000	35,067	0.78	C
	Gerald Ford Drive to Frank Sinatra Drive	Vehicular Oriented Arterials	45,000	29,028	0.65	C
Frank Sinatra Drive	Hollister Drive to Portola Avenue	Balanced Arterials	30,000	7,061	0.24	C
	Portola Avenue to Cook Street	Balanced Arterials	30,000	10,362	0.35	C
Portola Avenue	Frank Sinatra Drive to Desert Willow Court	Balanced Arterials	30,000	17,497	0.58	C
	Desert Willow Court to Country Club Drive	Balanced Arterials	30,000	17,813	0.59	C

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.
Notes: ADT = Average Daily Traffic; V/C = Volume to Capacity Ratio; LOS = Level of Service

Project Trip Generation and Distribution

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual* (11th Edition) was used to forecast vehicle trips generated by the proposed project, using the trip generation rate for the Single-Family Residential land use (ITE Code 210). Based on this forecast, the project is forecast to generate approximately 4,810 daily vehicle trips with 349 AM peak hour trips and 490 PM peak hour trips.

Existing With Project Conditions

Intersection Analysis

As shown in Table 4.17-4, *Existing With Project Intersection Analysis Results*, all intersections would operate at acceptable LOS D or better during the AM and PM Peak Hours under existing with project conditions. Since each intersection is projected to operate better than the LOS D threshold, no adverse effects on operations are projected. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

In addition, according to the City's Guidelines, projects that add more than 50 project-related trips to an intersection that is operating below the City's standards is required to pay a fair share contribution to improve the location. Since none of the study intersections would operate below the City's standards, a fair share contribution is not required of the proposed project under existing with project conditions.

Table 4.17-4
Existing With Project Intersection Analysis Results

ID	Intersection	Existing Conditions				Existing Conditions with Project			
		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
		LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]
1	Cook Street & I-10 WB On Ramp	C	22.0	A	2.2	C	22.1	A	3.8
2	Cook Street & I-10 EB On Ramp	D	40.7	C	33.4	C	33.5	C	34.6
3	Cook Street & Gerald Ford Drive	C	30.2	C	34.5	C	30.4	C	34.7
4	Frank Sinatra Drive & Hollister Drive	B	14.9	C	15.7	C	17.4	C	23.3
5	Frank Sinatra Drive & Portola Avenue	C	34.5	D	37.9	D	36.3	D	44.2
6	Frank Sinatra Drive & Cook Street	B	19.0	C	25.0	C	22.1	C	27.5
7	Portola Avenue & Desert Willow Court	C	15.2	C	19.4	D	30.8	D	32.7
8	Portola Avenue & Country Club Drive	D	42.1	D	39.5	D	45.5	D	40.9

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.
Notes:
1 = Delay is expressed in seconds per vehicle.
2 = LOS = Level of Service.

Roadway Segment Analysis

As shown in Table 4.17-5, *Existing With Project Roadway Segment Analysis Results*, all segments would operate at acceptable LOS C or better under existing with project conditions. Since each segment is projected to operate better than the LOS C threshold, no adverse effects on operations are projected. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

In addition, since all of the study roadway segments would operate above the City's LOS standard, a fair share contribution towards improvements is not required of the project under existing with project conditions.

Table 4.17-5
Existing With Project Roadway Segment Analysis Results

Roadway	Segment	Existing			Existing With Project		
		ADT	V/C	LOS	ADT	V/C	LOS
Cook Street	I-10 EB Ramps to Gerald Ford Drive	35,067	0.78	C	36,510	0.81	C
	Gerald Ford Drive to Frank Sinatra Drive	29,028	0.65	C	30,712	0.68	C
Frank Sinatra Drive	Hollister Drive to Portola Avenue	7,061	0.24	C	8,504	0.28	C
	Portola Avenue to Cook Street	10,362	0.35	C	12,286	0.41	C
Portola Avenue	Frank Sinatra Drive to Desert Willow Court	17,497	0.58	C	19,181	0.64	C
	Desert Willow Court to Country Club Drive	17,813	0.59	C	19,256	0.64	C

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.
Notes: ADT = Average Daily Traffic; V/C = Volume to Capacity Ratio; LOS = Level of Service

Opening Year 2027 Without Project Conditions

Intersection Analysis

As shown in Table 4.17-6, *Opening Year 2027 Without Project Intersection Analysis Results*, all intersections would operate at acceptable LOS D or better during the AM and PM Peak Hours under opening year (2027) without project conditions. Therefore, no adverse effects on operations are projected.

Table 4.17-6
Opening Year 2027 Without Project Intersection Analysis Results

ID	Intersection	Control Type	Opening Year 2027			
			AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]
1	Cook Street & I-10 WB On Ramp	Signal	C	24.7	A	8.0
2	Cook Street & I-10 EB On Ramp	Signal	D	50.7	D	48.6
3	Cook Street & Gerald Ford Drive	Signal	D	49.8	D	51.9
4	Frank Sinatra Drive & Hollister Drive	TWSC	C	15.5	C	16.4
5	Frank Sinatra Drive & Portola Avenue	Signal	D	35.7	D	39.4
6	Frank Sinatra Drive & Cook Street	Signal	B	19.7	C	29.4
7	Portola Avenue & Desert Willow Court	TWSC	C	15.7	C	20.4
8	Portola Avenue & Country Club Drive	Signal	D	45.6	D	43.1

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.

Notes:
1. Average seconds of delay per vehicle.
2. TWSC = Two-Way Stop-Controlled; AWSC = All-Way Stop-Controlled; LOS = Level of Service

Roadway Segment Analysis

As shown in Table 4.17-7, *Opening Year 2027 Without Project Roadway Segment Analysis Results*, all segments would operate at acceptable LOS of D or better under opening year (2027) without project conditions. Since each segment is projected to operate better than the LOS D threshold, no adverse effects on operations are projected.

Table 4.17-7
Opening Year 2027 Without Project Roadway Segment Analysis Results

Roadway	Segment	LOS C Capacity	Projected ADT	Projected V/C	Projected LOS
Cook Street	SB-10 Ramps to Gerald Ford Drive	45,000	42,225	0.94	C
Cook Street	Gerald Ford Drive to Frank Sinatra Drive	45,000	35,924	0.80	C
Frank Sinatra Drive	Hollister Drive to Portola Road	30,000	7,503	0.25	C
Frank Sinatra Drive	Portola Road to Cook Street	30,000	10,916	0.36	C
Portola Avenue	Frank Sinatra Drive to Desert Willow Court	30,000	20,590	0.69	C
Portola Avenue	Desert Willow Court to Country Club Drive	30,000	20,919	0.70	C

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.

Notes: ADT = Average Daily Traffic; V/C = Volume to Capacity Ratio; LOS = Level of Service

Opening Year 2027 With Project Conditions

Intersection Analysis

As shown in Table 4.17-8, *Opening Year 2027 With Project Intersection Analysis Results*, all intersections would operate at acceptable LOS D or better during the AM and PM Peak Hours under opening year (2027) with project conditions. Therefore, no improvements at any of the study intersections would be required. Impacts would be less than significant.

Table 4.17-8
Opening Year 2027 With Project Intersection Analysis Results

ID	Intersection	Control Type	Opening Year 2027 Without Project				Opening Year 2027 with Project			
			AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
			LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]	LOS	Delay[1]
1	Cook Street & I-10 WB On Ramp	Signal	C	24.7	A	8.0	C	24.9	A	9.3
2	Cook Street & I-10 EB On Ramp	Signal	D	50.7	D	48.6	D	53.0	D	51.6
3	Cook Street & Gerald Ford Drive	Signal	D	49.8	D	51.9	D	50.2	D	53.9
4	Frank Sinatra Drive & Hollister Drive	TWSC	C	15.5	C	16.4	C	18.1	C	24.8
5	Frank Sinatra Drive & Portola Avenue	Signal	D	35.7	D	39.4	D	37.6	D	46.4
6	Frank Sinatra Drive & Cook Street	Signal	B	19.7	C	29.4	C	22.9	C	32.0
7	Portola Avenue & Desert Willow Court	TWSC	C	15.7	C	20.4	D	30.4	D	31.6
8	Portola Avenue & Country Club Drive	Signal	D	45.6	D	43.1	d	50.4	D	44.9

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.

Notes:
1. Average seconds of delay per vehicle.
2. TWSC = Two-Way Stop-Controlled; AWSC = All-Way Stop-Controlled; LOS = Level of Service

Segment Analysis

As shown in Table 4.17-9, *Opening Year 2027 With Project Roadway Segment Analysis Results*, all segments would operate at acceptable LOS of D or better under opening year (2027) with project conditions. Since each segment is projected to operate better than the LOS D threshold, no adverse effects on operations are projected. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Table 4.17-9
Opening Year 2027 With Project Roadway Segment Analysis Results

Roadway	Segment	Opening Year 2027 Without Project			Opening Year 2027 Plus Project		
		ADT	V/C	LOS	ADT	V/C	LOS
Cook Street	SB-10 Ramps to Gerald Ford Drive	42,225	0.94	C	43,668	0.97	C
Cook Street	Gerald Ford Drive to Frank Sinatra Drive	35,924	0.80	C	37,608	0.84	C
Frank Sinatra Drive	Hollister Drive to Portola Road	7,503	0.25	C	9,667	0.32	C
Frank Sinatra Drive	Portola Road to Cook Street	10,916	0.36	C	12,840	0.43	C
Portola Avenue	Frank Sinatra Drive to Desert Willow Court	20,590	0.69	C	22,274	0.74	C
Portola Avenue	Desert Willow Court to Country Club Drive	20,919	0.70	C	22,362	0.75	C

Source: Michael Baker International, *Transportation Impact Analysis, Catavina Residential*, September 4, 2025; refer to Appendix H1.

Notes: ADT = Average Daily Traffic; V/C = Volume to Capacity Ratio; LOS = Level of Service

Transit Facilities

Transit service near the project site is provided by Sun Line Transit Agency. Transit Route 5 and 10 Commuter Link run along Cook Street. However, the closest bus stop is located near the intersection of Frank Sinatra Drive & Cook Street, which is over one-mile (more than a 20-minute walk) from the project site.

The project would not induce significant population growth and is consistent with the anticipated land use for the project site; refer to Section 4.14, *Population and Housing*. As a result, it is anticipated that existing transit service in the project area would be able to adequately accommodate the increase in project-generated transit trips. Thus, project impacts on existing and future transit services in the project area are expected to be less than significant.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks are provided intermittently on Frank Sinatra Drive, Portola Avenue, Portola Road, Cook Street and Country Club Drive. Marked crosswalks at the signalized intersections within the project area are provided for pedestrians.

Class II bike lanes are currently provided along Frank Sinatra Drive between Monterey Avenue and Gerald Ford Drive. Along Portola Avenue, Class II bike lanes are also provided on both sides of the road.

The project would not induce significant population growth and is consistent with the anticipated land use for the project site; refer to Section 4.14. As a result, it is anticipated that existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the project area would be able to adequately accommodate the increase in project-generated trips. Thus, project impacts on existing and future bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the project area are expected to be less than significant.

TUMF Fees

The Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) is a component of Riverside County's Measure A program to provide funding for transportation projects throughout the region. CVAG administers the TUMF program for the Coachella Valley and applies fee revenues toward priority projects in the regional arterial system. Upon payment of these fees, the project would be consistent with Riverside County Measure A.[44] A less than significant impact would occur.

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less Than Significant Impact. The project is within the jurisdiction of the City of Palm Desert within the County of Riverside. The County has adopted guidance on evaluating VMT for transportation impacts under CEQA. However, the City does not currently have guidance on evaluating VMT for transportation impacts. Therefore, the primary resource for this VMT screening assessment is the *County of Riverside Transportation Analysis Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled and Level of Service Assessment* dated December 2020 (County Guidelines). For the complete discussion of the project screening criteria and guidance, refer to Appendix H2, *VMT Assessment.*

Each of the screening criteria outlined in the County Guidelines were evaluated for the proposed project. The analysis determined the project meets the screening criteria based on the "Map-Based Screening" criterion. The Map-Based Screening eliminates the need for complex analyses by allowing existing VMT data to serve as a basis for screening smaller residential and office developments.

As discussed in Appendix H2, the project is located within RIVTAM TAZ 1605, which experiences less than the County average VMT/Capita. Specifically, the average VMT/Capita is 16.15 which is less than the Riverside County average VMT/Capita of 18.26, therefore satisfying the screening criteria for "Map-Based Screening" as outlined in the County Guidelines. VMT impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

Construction

The project has the potential to result in safety hazards during the short-term construction process. Partial and full lane closures may be required for a limited period of time during materials delivery and utility connection. During periods when partial or full lane closures are required, the applicant would be required to implement a temporary Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to minimize congestion and safety impacts during the construction process; refer to **Mitigation Measure TRA-1**. The TMP would include measures such as construction signage, limitations on timing for lane closures to avoid peak hours, temporary striping plans, and use of construction flagperson(s) to direct traffic during heavy equipment use, among others. The TMP would provide congestion relief during short-term construction activities

[44] Coachella Valley Association of Governments, *Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee Program for the Coachella Valley*, https://cvag.org/tumf/, accessed August 8, 2025.

and ensure safe travel. Thus, with implementation of **Mitigation Measure TRA-1**, construction-related impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Operations

As detailed in Chapter 9 (Traffic Signal Warrant Analysis) of the Traffic Impact Analysis, traffic signal warrants were evaluated at the project access points located at Frank Sinatra Drive & Hollister Drive (Intersection No. 4) and Portola Avenue & Desert Willow Court (Intersection No. 7). Both of these locations are currently two-way stop-controlled intersections. Based on the Traffic Intersection Analysis, neither intersection meets the criteria for a traffic signal installation under Existing Plus Project and Opening Year 2027 Plus Project conditions.

Nonetheless, to mitigate potential safety concerns raised by City Engineering, particularly related to northbound and southbound left-turn movements onto Frank Sinatra Drive, two traffic control options are included in the Traffic Impact Analysis. The first is installation of a raised center median to restrict northbound and southbound left turn movements onto Frank Sinatra Drive. The second option is installation of a new traffic signal at the project driveway at Frank Sinatra Drive. Under this scenario, the intersection is also forecast to operate at LOS B during the AM and PM peak hours. If Option 2 is approved by the City, the developer would be responsible for constructing the new traffic signal, or providing a fair-share payment towards the new traffic signal, or posting a bond for the fair-share payment of the new traffic signal. The traffic control options would be reviewed by City Engineering against applicable design and engineering standards. Based on the Traffic Impact Analysis, no safety improvements are required at the project's eastern entrance at Portola Avenue and Desert Willow Court.

The project does not propose changes to the City's circulation system, such as sharp curves or dangerous intersections, and would not introduce incompatible uses to area roadways (e.g., farm equipment or trucking facilities). The project's access locations would be designed to the City standards and provide adequate sight distance, sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian movement controls that meet the City's requirements to protect pedestrian safety. Thus, impacts related to hazards due to geometric design features or incompatible uses would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

TRA-1 **Construction Traffic Management Plan**. Prior to issuance of grading permits, the project applicant shall prepare a Traffic Management Plan (Construction TMP) for approval by the City of Palm Desert Traffic Engineer. The TMP shall include measures to minimize potential safety impacts during the short-term construction process if partial or full lane closures are required. The Construction TMP shall specify that one direction of travel in each direction on adjacent roadways must always be maintained during project construction activities. If full lane closures are required and one direction of travel in each direction cannot be maintained, the TMP shall identify planned detours. The Construction TMP shall include measures such as construction signage, limitations on timing for lane closures to avoid peak hours, temporary striping plans, and use of construction flagperson(s) to direct traffic during heavy equipment use. The TMP shall be incorporated into project specifications for verification prior to final plan approval.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed previously, access to the site would be provided via two entry points: one from Frank Sinatra Drive and one from Portola Avenue. The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) would review the proposed driveways and interior vehicular circulation network against the Department's requirements related to fire access and turning radius requirements. RCFD adheres to the requirements of the 2022 California Fire Code, which contains standards relative to emergency access, such as fire department access requirements. Access and circulation improvements would be designed and constructed consistent with City design and engineering standards. As such, project implementation would not interfere with the implementation of an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Further, the TMP would include measures such as construction signage, limitations on timing for lane closures to avoid peak hours, temporary striping plans, and use of

construction flagperson(s) to direct traffic during heavy equipment use. This would ensure adequate emergency access would be maintained. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure TRA-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to **Mitigation Measure TRA-1.**

4.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
1) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or				
2) Resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.				

As of July 1, 2015, California AB 52 was enacted and expanded CEQA by establishing a formal consultation process for California tribes within the CEQA process. The bill specifies that any project that may affect or cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource would require a lead agency to "begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project." Section 21074 of AB 52 also defines a new category of resources under CEQA called "tribal cultural resources." Tribal cultural resources are defined as "sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe" and is either listed on or eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or a local historic register, or if the lead agency chooses to treat the resource as a tribal cultural resource.

On February 19, 2016, the California Natural Resources Agency proposed to adopt and amend regulations as part of AB 52 implementing Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations, CEQA Guidelines, to include consideration of impacts to tribal cultural resources pursuant to Government Code Section 11346.6. On September 27, 2016, the California Office of Administrative Law approved the amendments to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, and these amendments are addressed within this Initial Study.

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

1) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

No Impact. As detailed in Response 4.5(a), no historic resources listed or eligible for listing in a State or local register of historical resources are located on the project site. Therefore, no impacts related to historic tribal cultural resources defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k) would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. In compliance with AB 52, on May 5, 2025, the City distributed letters notifying Native American Tribes that requested to be on the City's list for the purposes of AB 52 of the opportunity to consult with the City regarding the proposed project. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians responded and indicated that the project site is located within their tribal Traditional Use Area. Tribal representatives from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians requested consultation with the City, which occurred on occurred on May 30, 2025, and September 2, 2025.

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians has not indicated that the project site supports known tribal cultural resources. However, the Tribe has indicated the project site is considered sensitive for tribal cultural resources. As a result, on September 24, 2025, the Tribe requested a mitigation measure for tribal monitoring during ground disturbing activities and protocol for inadvertent discovery of tribal cultural resources, which has been included as **Mitigation Measure TCR-1**. To further protect tribal cultural resources, **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would require retention of a qualified archaeologist to monitor all ground-disturbing activities and prepare of a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for construction personnel. Should any previously unrecorded cultural resources be discovered during ground disturbance, all construction-related activities within a 100-foot radius of the discovery would halt while the resource is evaluated for significance in consultation with the qualified archaeologist and, if applicable, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measures TCR-1 and CUL-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to **Mitigation Measure CUL-1**.

TCR-1 Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Monitoring. The land developer shall retain a qualified tribal monitor(s) from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. Tribal monitor(s) shall be required on-site during all ground-disturbing activities, including grading, stockpiling of materials, engineered fill, rock crushing, etc. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the developer shall submit a copy of a signed contract between the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and the developer for the monitoring of the project to the Palm Desert Planning Department.

Upon discovery of any archaeological resources, the Tribal monitor(s) shall have the authority to halt all construction activities in the immediate vicinity of the find until the find can be assessed, in coordination with the project's qualified archaeologist, and, if necessary, prepare a mitigation plan for submission to the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Agua Caliente Tribal Historic Preservation Office. If the resources are Native American in origin, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians shall coordinate with the landowner regarding treatment and curation of the resource(s). Typically, the Tribe will request reburial if avoidance is not feasible. The reburial area will be selected in collaboration with the land developer, Palm Desert Planning Department, and the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and will be protected from future disturbance.

4.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?			✓	
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?			✓	
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			✓	
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?			✓	
e. Comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			✓	

This section is primarily based upon the *Water Supply Assessment for the Proposed Catavina Project*, prepared by MSA Consulting, Inc., dated February 2025; refer to Appendix I, *Water Supply Assessment*.

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less Than Significant Impact.

Water

The proposed development would be served by CVWD for water supply services. Public and private residential and irrigation lines would be constructed on site to connect to existing domestic water facilities within the roadways adjacent to the project site. The proposed project is consistent with land uses anticipated for the area and would not induce substantial unplanned population growth; refer to Section 4.11, *Land Use and Planning*, and Section 4.14, *Population and Housing*. Further, as confirmed in the *Water Supply Assessment* (Appendix I) prepared for the project, CVWD has confirmed that sufficient water supplies exist, or will exist based on current water planning assumptions, to meet the projected demands of the project. Thus, it is not anticipated that project implementation would require construction of new or expanded water facilities. Less than significant impacts would occur in this regard.

Wastewater

Sanitation service to the project site would be served by CVWD. On-site sewer laterals would connect to existing sewer facilities within the roadways adjacent to the project site. Pursuant to General Plan Public Utilities & Services Element Policy 2.2, the project Applicant would pay their share of new sewer infrastructure or improvements necessitated by the proposed project. Payment of these fees would fund improvements and upgrades to surrounding sewer lines as needed and would offset the project's increase in demand for wastewater collection services. Following compliance with General Plan Policy Public Utilities & Services Element 2.2, it is not anticipated that project implementation would

require construction of new or expanded wastewater facilities that would result in a significant environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Stormwater

The project proposes three retention basins to collect onsite stormwater. Onsite stormwater infrastructure would be constructed and maintained by the developer. Stormwater facilities within the public right-of-way are operated and maintained by the City of Palm Desert Public Works Department. Existing curb and gutter along the project perimeter would not be altered. The proposed onsite drainage system would adequately provide drainage treatments, detention, and conveyance in accordance with City of Palm Desert requirements. Construction of the new onsite storm drain improvements would be subject to compliance with all applicable local, State, and Federal laws, ordinances, and regulations. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Dry Utilities

As noted in Will Serve Letters from Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas (SoCalGas), the project site would be served by SCE for electricity services and SoCalGas for natural gas services. Existing SCE transmission lines run north to south in the eastern portion of the project site approximately 40 feet west of the eastern property line. The project would involve constructing new public and private on-site dry utility lines associated with such services. Furthermore, pursuant to Municipal Code Chapter 12.16, *Underground Utility Lines*, all electrical distribution lines must be installed underground. Payment of standard utility connection fees and ongoing user fees would ensure impacts to these utility services are adequately offset. The project's potential environmental impacts for construction in this regard are analyzed throughout this Initial Study. Construction of the project's dry utilities would also be subject to compliance with all applicable local, State, and Federal laws, ordinances, and regulations. As such, project impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Response 4.10(b). Water supplies for the project site would be provided by CVWD. As detailed in the WSA prepared for the project, CVWD has confirmed that sufficient water supplies exist, or will exist based on current water planning assumptions, to meet the projected demands of the project, in addition to current and future projected water demands within CVWD's service area in normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years over a 20-year projection. Accordingly, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to 4.19(a). CVWD would provide wastewater collection service for the proposed development. On-site sewer laterals would connect to existing sewer facilities in the adjacent roadways. As the project is consistent with the land use designation for the area, payment of standard sewer connection fees and ongoing user fees would ensure that sufficient capacity is available. As such, the project's potential impacts on wastewater treatment provider would be fully mitigated via payment of fees. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Less Than Significant Impact. The City contracts with Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services (Burrtec) to provide waste and recycling services. Solid waste would be taken to an approved transfer facility and then transferred to an approved processing or disposal facility. As indicated in the City's Franchise Agreement with Burrtec, there are four landfills serving the City.[45]

Construction

Project construction activities are not anticipated to generate significant quantities of solid waste with the potential to affect the capacity of regional landfills. Further, construction activities would be subject to conformance with relevant Federal, State, and local requirements related to solid waste disposal. Specifically, the project would be required to demonstrate compliance with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939), which requires all California cities to reduce, recycle, and re-use solid waste generated in the State to the maximum extent feasible. AB 939 requires that at least 50 percent of waste produced is recycled, reduced, or composted. The project would also be required to demonstrate compliance with the 2022 (or most recent) Green Building Code, which includes design and construction measures that act to reduce construction-related waste through material conservation and other construction-related efficiency measures. Compliance with these regulations would ensure the project's construction-related solid waste impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Based on CalRecycle's waste generation rates for residential development (12.23 pounds of waste per household per day), project operations are expected to generate 3.34 tons per day, or approximately 1,219.1 tons per year.[46] This represents less than one percent of any landfill's maximum daily permitted throughput capacity identified in Table 4.19-1, *Landfills Serving the City*. As such, the project is not anticipated to generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Table 4.19-1
Landfills Serving the City

Landfill/Location	Amount Disposed by City in 2019 (tons/year)	Maximum Daily Throughput (tons per day)	Remaining Capacity (cubic yards)	Anticipated Closure Date
Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill 16411 State Hwy 79, Beaumont, CA 92223	61,401	5,000	19,242,950	4/1/2032
Badlands Sanitary Landfill 31125 Ironwood Ave, Moreno Valley, CA 92555	238	5,000	7,800,000	1/1/2059
Salton City Solid Waste Site 935 W. Highway 86, Salton City, CA 92275	1,443	6,000	62,540,915	12/31/2038
El Sobrante Landfill 10910 Dawson Canyon Rd, Corona, CA 91719	1,140	16,054	143,977,170	1/1/2051

Sources:
1. California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, *Jurisdiction Disposal by Facility With Reported Alternative Daily Cover (ADC) and Alternative Intermediate Cover (AIC)*, https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DisposalReporting/Destination/DisposalByFacility, accessed January 13, 2025.
2. California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, *SWIS Facility/Site Search*, https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Search, accessed January 13, 2025.

[45] City of Palm Desert, *Contract No. C42860 —Amended Franchise Agreement for Collection of Solid Waste. Recyclables. and Organic Waste and Consideration of Proposed Increases to Solid Waste and Recycling Service Rates*, April 12, 2022.
[46] California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, *Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates*, https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastecharacterization/general/rates, accessed January 13, 2025.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

e) Comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less Than Significant Impact. Refer to Response 4.19(d) above. The proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste, including AB 939 and the City's solid waste reduction programs. Specifically, the project would be subject to AB 939, which requires that at least 50 percent of waste produced be recycled, reduced, or composted. As such, less than significant impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

4.20 Wildfire

If located in or near State responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				✓
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?				✓
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?				✓
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?				✓

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map Viewer, the project site is not located in a very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ), nor within a State Responsibility Area[47]. Therefore, the project would not impair an adopted emergency evacuation or response plan. No impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No Impact. The project site is approximately 77.3 gross acres (66.3 net acres) consisting of undeveloped, highly disturbed land. The project site topography is relatively flat (approximately 261 to 277 feet above mean sea level). The project surroundings are largely built out with single-family residential, multi-family residential and commercial uses and do not contain wildlands. The project proposes on site installation of ornamental vegetation, which would be regularly maintained and landscaped, and would not present a wildfire risk. The project site would be fully developed with buildings and hardscape and would not present a wildfire risk. Further, pursuant to Municipal Code Chapter 15.26, project development must comply with the California Fire Code. Therefore, the project would not expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors that may exacerbate wildfire risks. No impact would occur, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[47] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, *FHSZ Viewer*, https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008, accessed January 29, 2025.

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact. Refer to Response 4.21(b). The project site would be developed with buildings and hardscape and is located in a largely built-out area that does not contain wildlands. The proposed development would be served by the existing roadway network, and all utility connections, including sewer laterals, dry utility lines, and water lines, would connect to existing facilities in adjacent roadways. All utilities would be undergrounded and would not present wildfire risk. No improvements are proposed to provide an emergency water source. Therefore, the project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary ongoing impacts to the environment. No impact would occur, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No Impact. As mentioned, the topography of the project site and surrounding areas are relatively flat and do not contain steep slopes. Further, according to the Geotechnical Investigation, there is no evidence of landslides or slope instabilities at the project site. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's *National Flood Hazard Layer*, the project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area.[48] Specifically, the project site is located within Zone X, which indicates areas of minimal flood hazard. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. No impact would occur, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

[48] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *FEMA Flood Map Service Center: National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette*, https://hazards-fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd, accessed January 29, 2025.

4.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		✓		
b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?		✓		
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓		

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. As concluded in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, to reduce impacts to special status wildlife, the project would implement **Mitigation Measure BIO-1**, which requires a pre-construction survey for nesting birds. **Mitigation Measure BIO-2** would require that tree trimming/removal activities occur outside of the bat maternity season (i.e., October 1 through February 28). If tree removal/trimming activities occur during the maternity season, which is March 1 through September 30, a pre-construction bat survey would be conducted by a qualified biologist within seven days prior to these activities. **Mitigation Measure BIO-3** would require a pre-construction burrowing owl survey to ensure there are no direct impacts on burrowing owl. With implementation of these mitigation measures, biological impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

As indicated in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources* and Section 4.18, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, no archaeological or tribal cultural resources occur on-site. To protect previously undiscovered cultural or tribal cultural resources, **Mitigation Measure CUL-1** would require retention of a qualified archaeologist to monitor all ground-disturbing activities and prepare of a Worker Environmental Awareness Program for construction personnel. Should any previously unrecorded cultural resources be discovered during ground disturbance, all construction-related activities within a 100-foot radius of the discovery would halt while the resource is evaluated for significance in consultation with the qualified archaeologist and, if applicable, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. **Mitigation Measure TCR-1** would require tribal monitoring during ground disturbing activities and protocol for inadvertent discovery of tribal cultural resources. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and TCR-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

Although unlikely since the project site is underlain by dune sand deposits, impacts to previously undiscovered paleontological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**, which requires paleontological monitoring and resource recovery if necessary.

As analyzed, the project would not degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California prehistory.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. A significant impact may occur if a proposed project, in conjunction with related projects, would result in impacts that are less than significant when viewed separately, but would be significant when viewed together. As concluded in Section 4.1 through Section 4.20, the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts in any environmental categories with implementation of the project mitigation measures. Implementation of mitigation measures at the project-level would reduce the potential for the incremental effects of the proposed project to be considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, current projects, or probable future projects. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated in this regard.

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. Previous sections of this Initial Study reviewed the proposed project's potential impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, transportation, and other issues. As concluded in these previous discussions, the proposed project would not have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, following conformance with the existing regulatory framework and implementation of project mitigation measures. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated in this regard.

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